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ABSTRACT

Strategies to improve disadvantaged young people's access to and progression within initial vocational training (VT) were identified through a study of relevant experiences within the European Union's member states. The study, which was based on national reports from each country, focused on the following topics: identifying the challenges and problems in compulsory schools and initial VT; improving compulsory education (the need to tackle failure at its roots; curriculum variation; vocational guidance through the curriculum; area-based interventions; Denmark's successful synthesis of guidance and vocational education); increasing readiness for VT (preparatory measures, youth guarantees and outreach measures, alternative institutions as "stepping stones" to training); improving initial VT; implications of training and/or retraining teachers and trainers; and improving cooperation between training providers. Fifteen themes for future cooperation were identified. (Appended are the following: target group definitions; the Netherlands' 1993 plan for reducing early school leaving; "individual programs" in upper secondary school in Sweden; external and internal school "units" in Norway; the "Mission Nouvelles Qualifications" in France; a study of "hard core" disadvantaged young people; discussion of the United Kingdom's "Youth Training" as a model for training of disadvantaged young people in a market system; and labor market measures.) (MN)

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ED 418 269

EDUCATION
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YOUTH

Strategies to improve young people's access to, and their progression within, initial vocational training

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STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACCESS TO, AND THEIR PROGRESSION WITHIN, INITIAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING

A study prepared

at the request of the European Commission

by John Banks

November 1994

Extract from the Employment Promotion Law, 1990 *Germany*

"1. Disadvantaged young persons and young adults may not be discriminated against in their job- and life- opportunities by means of different and inferior qualification goals. They may not be further stigmatised by way of separate training courses, but rather integrated into the standard system. This means that there must be varying and differentiated paths to the same vocational training goals."

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study, in the words of the Commission, is "to demonstrate good practice and facilitate the exchange of relevant experience in order to complement and support Member States' activities directed towards some of the specific objectives set out in the Decision establishing the PETRA[1] programme in 1991, namely those

> - which are aimed at ensuring that all young people in the Community who so wish receive one or, if possible, two or more years' initial vocational training in addition to their full-time compulsory education, leading to a vocational qualification recognised by the competent authorities of the Member State in which it is obtained
>
> - which offer choice for young people with different levels of ability
>
> - which are intended to devote particular attention to **young people most at risk, including disabled and disadvantaged young people, as well those who leave full-time compulsory education with few or no qualifications, with a view to making it possible for them to obtain a recognised training qualification and thus facilitate their transition to employment**".

The study is based on a national report from each country prepared by an independent expert nominated by the Ministry or Ministries responsible for the country's participation in PETRA, and paid for by the Commission. These reports contain much valuable, if transient, information and insight into policies and practices, and their shortcomings. Most of the small-print in this overview report is first-hand, sometimes edited, quotation from them.

The focus of the report, then, is on those young people who fail, for one reason or another, to enter, or having entered, to qualify in, initial vocational training, and so either do not enter employment or are at risk of not doing so. Every Member State has some measures in place to help such people: many have a lot. At the same time many are revising and improving their systems of "mainstream" compulsory schooling and initial vocational training in important ways which are aimed, directly or indirectly, also to help such young people. This report therefore has to describe, in addition to these more or less targeted measures, a large number of "general reforms".

---

[1] the European Union's programme on the initial vocational training of young people and their preparation for adult and working life

Space prevents these being presented in full, and still less a general account of the systems of compulsory education and initial vocational training in current use in each of the Member States[2].

The interplay between *mainstream* and *additional*[3] provision is a vital part of the policy-making in this whole area, and it is encouraging that this is well reflected in most of the measures here described. The continued integration or reintegration with their peer-group of young people for whom additional measures are needed, is almost universally regarded as of prime importance.

As a result, the report is structured sequentially on the progress of the young person through the successive stages[4] of compulsory school and initial vocational training, with emphasis on those at risk.

Chapter 1 reviews some statistical evidence about drop-out and failure in compulsory education and initial vocational training, and defines two target groups

Chapter 2 reviews the main challenges and problem areas in the functioning of the compulsory school and initial vocational training

Chapter 3, 4, 5, and 6 reviews measures being taken to deal with the challenges and problems

Chapter 3 in the compulsory school

Chapter 4 in preparing young people for entry to vocational training

Chapter 5 in vocational training itself

Chapter 6 in the training and retraining of different kinds of teachers, and in-firm trainers

Chapter 7 reviews developments in cooperative action to improve training and preparation for training

Chapter 8 sets out some Conclusions.

The Annexes cover certain innovations and other points in more detail

---

[2] Readers who need more detailed data (on the 12 current Member States only) may find it, and other useful background material, in "Measures to combat failure at school: a challenge for the construction of Europe" (EURYDICE, for the Task-Force Human Resources, Education, Training, and Youth of the European Commission. Brussels, 1993), especially the Information Sheets on the education systems of the Member States

[3] "Special" (as in "special education") is used throughout the report only to refer to types of education or training provided mainly or exclusively for those with mental or physical disabilities. This report does not specifically deal with that provision, though policies for it are often connected to the policies treated here, and vice versa. See also the end of chapter 2 on this point

[4] in those countries (ie Belgium, Luxemburg, the Netherlands) where pupils are selected/streamed sometime between the ages of 12 and 14 and some enter vocational or pre-vocational streams or tracks, these stages overlap. Elsewhere, the break between compulsory general education and the start of initial vocational training usually falls either at the end of compulsory schooling or in the last year of it. But see chapter 3 on developments aimed at a more gradual transition

A report like this has to compress into a few pages a review of the efforts of some 17 "countries"[5], - a number which could be much higher if the component states of the federal countries (Germany, Spain) or the partly-devolved UK were counted as well. "Conclusions" in the sense of general, universal, recommendations or truths that are valid across so many boundaries, and in so many different contexts and cultures, are quite few. But there are clear common goals and shared, if not common, perceptions about how to move towards them. These are set out as an agenda for the Community to consider, in chapter 8.

A mass of observations can also be made, of potential value for the more direct exchange or transfer of ideas and experience from one country to another. These are in the text, not in the Conclusions chapter. Because of this, the report is rather long. But then, in social affairs, "policy" is made at all levels: the one who "implements" is as much a creator of "policy" as the one who sits in the Ministry and drafts the law. So to omit much of the detail is to risk missing the essence of new ideas: "god is in the details".

Finally, it is impossible that a report like this written under pressure and covering so much terrain, will be free from mistakes of interpretation or analysis. These, of course, are mine. I can only apologise in advance to those of my colleagues and friends whose material is misrepresented, while at the same time thanking them most sincerely for making my task a richly rewarding experience.

28 Patshull Road
London NW5 2JY
15 November 1994

[5] ie 12 Member States, but treating Flanders and Wallonie separately as two; plus the applicant-member EFTA countries ie Austria, Finland, Norway, Sweden

Summary of the Report

Chapter 1 The target groups

Despite the gains of recent years there are still many young people who leave compulsory education early or without full certification. Many more fail or do not complete initial vocational training. Although there are wide differences between countries, figures of 10% and 20% respectively for these two groups can be regarded as reasonable estimates.

Chapter 2 Problems and challenges

Three aspects of compulsory schooling are at fault: teaching methods which fail less competent pupils; too rigid and unsuitable curricula; and insufficient attention to personal development and career guidance. Standards have risen in training, though the image of technical and vocational training is still negative in many countries. A clear, progressive and nationally accepted qualification system is seen as essential. Shortages of training places limits growth and therefore access. Family educational background remains a good predictor of a student's choice of level/length of training. Wrong choice of course, problems of content, teaching methods, and conditions of learning all contribute to trainees dropping out. There is still much gender stereotyping.

Chapter 3 Improving compulsory education

Many countries are engaged in substantial reforms of compulsory education, emphasising success-based learning, more flexible curricula, and tutorial supervision. Greater curriculum and management freedom are being given to schools, which are expected to develop closer links with their communities, economic and social. The transition from general to vocational courses is being made more gradual, at all levels, and in different ways. Some countries have established flexible alternative school units for pupils with particular learning difficulties. All countries are trying to offer more vocational guidance through the curriculum as well as extending vocational information and advice. Area- and school-based positive discrimination is used in a few countries with encouraging results.

Chapter 4 Increasing readiness for vocational training

A general aim is to move from rigid systems of initial vocational training with fixed entry ages and course durations to an open system of training "pathways", with flexible entry and exit points, and credit accumulation. Modularisation is seen as permitting greater choice and even some individualisation of courses. Apprenticeship is being integrated with other training in the countries with school-based vocational training systems.

For young people lacking adequate basic education, some countries have developed "preparatory" or "stepping stone" courses in schools or elsewhere, to increase their readiness and commitment to enter initial training. Other "bridging" arrangements, usually comprising an extra year between school and training are being used and extended. Anti-youth-unemployment (or "labour market") measures offering limited periods of work experience and

some training but without a qualification at the end, are being subsumed into Youth Guarantees and "rights" to training, which seek to recruit trainees into regular qualifying training. The need to actively encourage demotivated young people to take advantage of these offers is reflected in various initiatives to strengthen the "follow up" responsibility of either the schools or community-based guidance staff, and to offer "one-stop" contact points to help young people find the most appropriate form of training.

In several countries "production-based learning" (*l'insertion par l'économique*) is in use and is seen as the most successful way of helping young people towards entry to regular training.

Chapter 5 Improving initial vocational training

Major reforms to initial vocational training are under way in many countries. They are characterised by emphasis on free access, fewer specialisations, greater decentralisation of control, modularised curricula, greater responsiveness to local requirements and more holistic teaching methods designed to associate general and skill-specific learning so as to develop general (so-called "transverse") skills or qualities in young people. Some countries already have fully modular curricula in place; others are moving towards it. "Empowerment" of the young person, as well as of institutions, is a feature of the market economy approach in some countries.

The development of greater flexibility and individualisation by these means is seen as helping the less motivated and competent student to succeed in qualifying. Opinion appears to differ on whether this is enough, or more needs to be offered, to ensure that all students are assured of obtaining a basic qualification. Alternative forms of training for a minority are in use in a few countries. Tight costing of the training carried out by training bodies on contract, and financial competition between institutions, are not seen as helpful to training disadvantaged young people.

Substantial programmes of support for disadvantaged students in vocational training have been in existence in Germany for some time.

Alternance, in different forms, is becoming the standard form of initial training. Much effort is devoted, in these support programmes,to making it work better for the less competent student. The need to persuade or induce (financially) firms to offer more training places to make such a system work properly, is a widespread problem. Joint efforts through national agreements between governments and the social partners, and medium-term targets, have been successful in some countries.

Chapter 6 Implications for the training/retraining of teachers/trainers

Policies for the pre-service training and then the deployment of teachers who teach general education in compulsory schools are a matter of debate and concern in some countries. The traditional training provided (where there is any) is seen as unsuitable for teachers who have to teach pupils with poor motivation and little or no family support for their education. Fear of teachers becoming social workers is an obstacle to the development of more holistic professional approaches. The need to define more precisely the professional skills required

to teach in secondary education appears urgent in this context. Few countries offer special courses on teaching difficult children.

With teacher turn-over low, a lot depends on in-service training. Pressure on budgets hit in-service training badly. Decentralisation of control of content and budgets to school level may make matters worse if budgets are under pressure, since funds for in-service training expenditure are not usually earmarked.

With a few exceptions there is little evidence of specific training for vocational subject teachers or in-firm trainers.

Encouraging progress seems to be made where countries have decided to launch a multi-point medium-term action plan in support of the introduction of their reforms of compulsory school and/or initial training, and have included in-service training in it, especially where it has been part of officially-supported local curriculum development. The adoption of performance targets linked to the year 2000, and backed by such plans is a new and encouraging feature.

Chapter 7 Improving cooperation between providers of training

Open systems of education and training require the development of partnerships at all levels between government and the social partners. National-level councils to consider and agree targets and medium-term policies in training are becoming common. Shorter-term priorities for assisting particular target groups may also be dealt with in this way at national and other levels. Networking of all the actors concerned has developed as a flexible response to quicker changes in local and regional requirements, especially in relation to the needs of disadvantaged youth.

School links with firms have become almost universal in some countries while others have yet to initiate them. National-level leadership has played a major part here. Increasing local responsiveness to changing economic and industrial needs has been an important aim.

The need to improve post-compulsory school follow-up of early school leavers has triggered new initiatives at local level to focus offers of training through a single agency or "one-stop shop" where young people can find out about everything that is available for them.

Local partnership is being used for a variety of purposes in education and training. In France, the development of both training opportunities and more jobs, has been undertaken by local task-forces aimed at helping marginalised young people reintegrate and find employment.

Chapter 8 Themes for future cooperation

The extent and seriousness of failure and drop-out described in the report is considerable. It constitutes a major and growing threat to the economic and social prosperity of the Community. The study strongly suggests that cooperative action in the Community would strengthen and speed up national responses. Many new initiatives have been revealed in the national reports. Although there are wide variations in the stage of development reached, and in the forms, of education and training, and provision for young people at risk of failure or

dropping out, there are many areas where collaboration on the development of policy and practice would be possible and advantageous. The adoption of national policy targets, in a Community frame, is recommended. 15 themes are set out on which action should be taken to exchange ideas and experience and develop models of good practice in the framework of existing Community Initiatives.

Questions arising

This list sets out, in very brief form, the main "questions arising" from the report, along with some of the keywords (underlined) that occur in the national reports. The substance of questions is developed in the form of themes for further consideration and action in Chapter 8.

1 Compulsory education

mainstream

- primary stage: school-based positive discrimination of resources to enrich/extend the curriculum
  - effectiveness over time; how should additional resources be used to best support the deprived child's psycho-social development?

- why have only some countries set themselves policy targets to reduce failure in schools: eg reducing failure/repeating level at age 12?

- how best can schools' use early warning indicators of children "at risk" ie factors associated with failure?

- if, for a range of pupils, quality in secondary education should not mean "more of the same" ie the traditional book-based curriculum, what should it mean instead? who has developed eg science or humanities courses which suit these pupils?

- what examples are there of good practice in schools' provision of "adapted education" (especially pastoral care, guidance and tutoring)?

- what experience is there in developing assessment and credit for "Level 1" attainment ie partial credit towards a basic secondary school, or pre-vocational, certificate? (credit accumulation)

- staffing issues

  - what solutions are there to the lack of recognition and therefore status of the skilled secondary stage teacher? how are the pedagogic, as well as subject-based, skills to be recognised and rewarded?

  - what is the training or other preparation needed to enable secondary school teachers to teach at the level where low-achieving or slow-learning pupils start learning?

  - how should teachers be recruited, so that those assigned to teach disadvantaged pupils are assigned on a positive basis, not either by chance, or by lack of seniority to choose to go elsewhere?

  - how can schools organise their staff so that deprived pupils are given the chance to make stable adult relationships in school? is the on-going class teacher system a general solution?

- what are the best ways to use modularisation, and what are the limits of its use?

- how should non-school learning be used to enrich the curriculum effectively?

- how can the pupil's peer group be used as social support for learning? what evidence is there of the value of befriending, buddies, or older models, inside and outside the school?

- what steps can be taken to counter the deprived parent's negative attitude to school and teachers?

- how can the compulsory school help achieve greater parity of esteem between general and vocational-

technical studies?

alternative;

- what examples are there of policies to enable schools to withdraw difficult pupils, and what are the conditions which enable them to do so? what criteria should be used?
- should alternative provision be off- or on-site, or both?
- what are the upper limits of the size of the target group for alternative provision?
- what makes alternative provision non-stigmatising?
- what are the true net costs of alternative provision, taking account of likely "downstream" savings, ie private sector (savings on eg injury, theft, insurance and security services) as well as public sector savings (social work, care, health, custodial, judiciary, probation, social security etc)?

2 Access - increasing readiness to train, after compulsory schooling

follow up of early school leavers

- where should responsibility be located locally?
- which services are to be coordinated?
- in what ways does empowerment of young people help?
  - are training vouchers effective as incentives?

recovering or re-orienting early school leavers

- what should the curriculum content be? what evidence is there for a production-based pedagogy?
- what examples are there of the use of partial training leading to partial credit? (Progression)
- what effect does participation in a youth initiative project have?

3 training

mainstream

- progression: what are the necessary components of a multiple pathway system?
- how do school/colleges provide guidance, tutoring, or other (eg peer) support for the "at risk" trainee?
- what is the best role for apprenticeship in an integrated training system?
- how are in-firm trainers best trained in a school-based training system?

alternative provision

- what are the benefits and characteristics of intermediate firms/resource centres/schools, ie those based on learning through production?
- what are the institutional and staffing requirements?
- how should teachers be trained for them?

Chapter 1

The target groups

Introduction

The field of this study is the progress of young people through compulsory education into initial vocational training and onto the labour market. Much has been done in recent years to improve the quality and variety of what is offered them there at each stage. But the starting point for our work is that even now we know that a considerable number "fail" in some sense, or are failed, at each stage; and the aim of the study is to examine what are believed to be the causes for that; what remedies have been devised to deal with them; and whether there is scope for action at Community level, in some form, to increase their application and success.

1 THE COMPULSORY SCHOOL: SUCCESS, AND FAILURE

The past decade has been, in general, a story of steady advance towards the general goal of offering all young people 9 or even 10 years of education as a preparation for their entry to adult life. Not only do most stay willingly in school: in more and more countries they apply, in strikingly greater numbers, to continue in some form of education or training. Indeed we are now starting to take it for granted that soon almost all will wish to do so, and our attention is concentrated on ensuring that suitable opportunities exist for them to do so successfully. We see the term "early school leaver" starting to be used to describe not just those who quit at, or before, the end of compulsory education but the larger group of all those who enter the labour market without obtaining a basic vocational qualification - a group sometimes previously named the "unqualified".

For **France** the most marked general changes of the past 10 years are longer schooling and a related rapid rise in the average level of attainment in school. In 1992-93, 46% of young people aged 16-25 were in education compared with 32% 10 years ago. Sights are now set on 80% of an age-group passing a Baccalaureate by the year 2000, and for **all** pupils by then to attain "Level V[6]", ie finish the last year of a short vocational course or to have completed part of a long course. The Bacc pass rate has already reached 63% of an age-group compared with 34% in 1980

The number leaving education and training at Level V continues to fall, as a result of the increase in opportunities to go on and take a higher vocational certificate (BEP) or a vocational Bacc, and the increasing attractiveness of apprenticeship following its reform in 1987 which opened it to applicants at any level, though three quarters of apprentices are still training to take a basic vocational qualification (CAP)

For the **UK** (England and Wales), with a succession of major policy changes in the last decade, what is particularly marked is the increase, especially after 1989, in the proportion remaining in full-time education and training. The percentage entering employment without formal training fell between 1988-92 from 38% to 23% for 17/18-year-olds, and between 1989-93 from 64% to 54% for 18/19-year-olds

In **Ireland** the "staying on" figure rose from 78% in 1989 to 85% in 1993: and those leaving then with no qualification at all fell from 7% to 5.5%. Similarly the proportion of school-leavers moving into some form of training has increased: 17% in 1993, up from about 8% in 1990, and of these about 76-78% completed their courses in 1993, compared with 76% in 1989

Austria has seen continuous growth, from the 1970s, in the proportion of pupils opting for (upper) secondary schools, from 32.8% in 1970 to 52.8% in 1992. Pupil numbers went up by 63% between 1977/8 and 1992/3. The proportion not transferring was as low as 1% in 1990, having fallen without interruption from 18% in 1970, and its recent rise is due to more immigration. About 1/3 of special school pupils enter the Dual (apprenticeship) System

Greece also has a very high transfer rate from compulsory school (to lykeio) though this has its downside; drop-out is correspondingly higher at the point of application to university where it is estimated that 3 candidates out of 4 are rejected

[6] in France, the lowest level is VI, and the highest I; Level V corresponds to a basic vocational qualification. Elsewhere, Level I is the lowest and Level V the highest

In **Norway** in 1975 25% did not continue in school after the end of their compulsory education; the majority went into employment, so that 1/3 of 17-19 year-olds were registered as full-time employees. But in 1992 95.3% transferred directly to upper secondary school, and only 4.7% did not continue. The period 1977/78 to 19992/3 can thus be seen as marked by

- a dramatic expansion (53%) in upper secondary school places
- a much worse labour market, effectively closed to 16-19 year-olds, making upper secondary education an acceptable alternative

There are however a certain number of young people who do not succeed in compulsory education. They are made up of those who

- drop out of compulsory school
- continue to the end but leave without having obtained any certification
- leave at the end with partial or incomplete certification.

We shall turn in a moment to the question of what happens to them after leaving compulsory school. Here we are simply concerned to establish, as common ground in 1994, that

- some proportion leave school having "failed" in one of the ways above

- this constitutes "school-failure" as far as the aims and responsibilities of the compulsory school are concerned.

When we look closer at the picture in different countries, to consider who these young people are and therefore why they "fail", we see that there are naturally big differences in the proportion who fail in one or more of these ways

- In the countries which use repeating, it is the extent of repeating which is regarded as the first indicator of failure within the compulsory school. It follows that the first goal in such systems is a reduction in the number repeating

- Levels and types of "certification" at the end of compulsory school vary: some countries do not have any; some, where vocational education and training starts before the end of the period of compulsory education, offer a very low-level vocational certificate, below what is increasingly regarded as a "basic vocational qualification" ie a certificate at Level 1, not Level 2. So the meaning of "failure", even in this narrow educational sense, is very country-specific: we are not dealing in figures or percentages which hold absolutely for all countries.

Data on dysfunctions such as "failure" is strictly relative to the ends and means of the system. As we aim higher, unless we change our system, it is inevitable that more will "fail", but at a higher level. Many of the youngsters who "succeed" in 1994 terms will "fail" when assessed in Year 2000 terms. This should make us try to be clearer about what the value is of "failure". Do we need it at all in this sense? Can we not do without it?

We have also to be aware of the difficulties in the way of doing something which sounds quite simple, namely comparing data from different countries on how many quit school at the end of compulsory education:

- Only some countries collect cohort data ie a picture of what happens to all young people in each year's age-group. Some have plans to do so. But others have to rely on "stock" data such as what is the highest level of education that has been reached by all members of the workforce or the population. Estimates are then made about how many must have left school eg at the end of compulsory education

With these reservations underlying it, Table 1 attempts to give some figures for compulsory school failure.

Table 1[7]

Line A: % leaving compulsory school before the end, or without certification
Line B: % not continuing into any type of education or training after the end of compulsory school

	A	B nl	D	DK	E	GR	IRL
A		3		< 0.5	23	12[3]	10
B	2[1]		11	6[2]	14		7[4]

	I	L	N	NL	P	S	SF	UK
A		40-50		2.1	48	2.7	0.3[2]	8
B	11	37[5]	4.7[2]	5	23		10[2]	6

Source: National reports No figures supplied for the other countries
Some figures are estimates of recent performance but not related to a specific year. Years given are as follows

1 1993/94
2 1992
3 1988-93
4 1993
5 1988

In this Table, we have some countries where the drop-out or non-completion rates are already very low - in single figures, or nearly zero.

In **Sweden**, only a tiny proportion of pupils complete Year 9 without certificates in two or more subjects (2.7% in 1992/3) though the figure is higher in large urban areas, and lower in rural ones (1.1.%). In 1990/91, 98.9% of 9th year pupils applied to enter upper secondary school, and 89.9% began it in the school year immediately after compulsory school; and some of those who do not transfer directly reappear later. In 1992, this latter figure had risen to 95.7%, and 97% in 1993, with 100% transferring in some municipalities and only 86% in others

In **Denmark**, the overall transition into different types of education and training is very high: 93% in 1989/90. But the aim is to raise it to more than 95% by 2000

In **Finland**, practically all children in compulsory school apply to enter upper secondary education or vocational education and training, and 90% do so immediately after finishing compulsory school

[7] A, Austria; B fr, Belgium (Wallonia); B nl, Belgium (Flanders); D, Germany; DK, Denmark; E, Spain; F, France; GR, Greece; I, Italy; IRL, Ireland; L, Luxemburg; N, Norway; NL, the Netherlands; P, Portugal; S, Sweden; SF, Finland; UK, the United Kingdom

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We have, at the opposite extreme, some countries where the figures are very high - over 30%. These are countries where either compulsory education has until recently been of short duration (Spain, Portugal), or where it has been organised on very selective lines with rigorous rules on failure and repeating (Luxemburg)

Spain has a major Reform under way, affecting both compulsory school and initial vocational training. Under the old system, the Spanish school system has two annual assessment periods (June and September) and repeating. Pupils who have failed at least three subjects in the second assessment can repeat up to twice, ie 2 years beyond the (current) end of compulsory school at age 14 (- to become 16 when the Reform is effective). Many pupils fail in June: about 45% in the second cycle of basic schooling (EGB): about 10-20% fail again in September and 10% repeat in each of the first two years

In **Portugal**, where reforms of compulsory school and a major diversification of vocational provision are also being implemented 48% of pupils are estimated to have been dropping out of compulsory school until recently. But the extension of compulsory school (from 6 to 9 years) has already started to halt this wastage, though there are big regional variations, the rural north lagging furthest behind. Repeating is already becoming much less common: betwen 1985/6 and 1992/3 it fell from 15-30% a year in the first 6 years of schooling to 5-10%. But even now, although 99% of pupils are still at school aged 10-11, only 71% are in their original classes. At age 12-14, the figures are 85% and 55%; at 15-17, 65% and 34%

The pre-Reform situation in compulsory schooling in **Luxemburg** showed that, despite a steady fall since the 1970s in the proportion of pupils in "*enseignement complémentaire*"[8] in favour of the other two types of secondary schooling, in 1991/2, 13% of pupils were still being allocated to it at the end of primary education (age 12). 55% of them immigrants: this type of schooling was, however, a "dead-end", since it led to no recognised qualification, and 53% of an age-group were leaving the compulsory school stage with no ascertainable certification. Only 9% of foreign pupils managed not to repeat at all compared with 19% for the total school population. As many as 60% of foreign pupils were dropping out of classical (general) or technical school

In the middle are other countries, with varying figures, ranging from 5% upwards

In **Germany** while age-group percentage figures are not available, 21.9% of secondary general school leavers (33,300) in the old *Länder* left in 1992 without a school leaving certificate. The size of the group, though stable now, is regarded as likely to increase in the future. In the "new" *Länder*, 8.8% of similar leavers left without a certificate in 1992. Within these totals 1/3 were from special schools. 1/3 of all foreign pupils in the "old" *Länder* (there are virtually no foreign pupils in the new *Länder*) left without a certificate, 24% from special schools. This figure has remained roughly stable between 1989 and 1992

The **Dutch** total of all "early school leavers" ie those who are without an "entrance qualification to the labour market" is estimated at 12,500, or about 5% of an age-group. These comprise a very heterogeneous group. 50% are 16 or more years of age; 30% are 15, and 20% are 14

[8] see page 31

2 *NON-COMPLETION/FAILURE IN POST-COMPULSORY EDUCATION AND TRAINING*

We now turn to the next stage: post-compulsory (or initial) education and training, where the general picture of success and failure is very different. The percentages for failure/non-completion are higher but harder to interpret.

Here, non-completion of the course is as much, if not more, of a problem as failure ie not passing. Those who do not complete, usually called drop-outs, are a very mixed group:

- Many will be **"switchers"**. Some of them started on the wrong course, for various reasons: they may have aimed too high: they may have chosen the wrong branch or trade; they may not have been able to get onto the course they wanted and have decided they do not want to continue on that. They may restart on a different course, and may or may not qualify on it. Those who restart on another course and finish have not failed as such: they may have been poorly advised ("mis-guided" in the strict sense of the term), and they may have got something, or even a great deal, from the course they did not complete

- Others will **quit**. They may have found a job, and perhaps only ever saw training as the best way to get one. They may have decided they or their family needs more money. They may have other reasons. But all those that leave at this point are likely to lack the necessary basic qualification to enter the labour market, or to reenter training later, in a world where basic training is no more than a beginning to the training likely to be needed in the course of a 21st century lifetime

The extent and causes of switching and quitting could well be the subject of a separate study: it varies a great deal between countries. Because statistically this is difficult to trace, we have for this study only a rough picture of its seriousness and extent. Nonetheless, such high non-completion/failure figures as we see in Table 2 hardly indicate a system that is working satisfactorily. Too early choices, ill-informed and ill-considered, are certainly partly to blame. Systems which promote unrealistic ambitions are also at fault. So are some parents. When the young people are asked for their opinions, other factors emerge too - as we shall see in chapter 2 on the reasons for dropping out.

Any figures are again subject to several country-specific factors

- some countries have shorter qualifying courses than others: those with 2-year training, regarding as failures only those who do not qualify on them, are setting themselves a lower standard than those which have already established 3 years as the minimum for a vocational training course

- not all 2-year courses are of the same value or quality in terms of providing a basic vocational qualification: some may be very trade-specific and hardly a preparation for further training

- apprenticeships combine learning with working, and are naturally regarded as qualifying the young people on them. But apprenticeship systems vary a great deal, and even though the apprenticeships usually last 3 years, the quality of the training may not always equate with that of a school-based course

- substantial numbers of young people in some countries fail on higher-level courses of general education, supposed to lead to university entry. These appear in the figures in the Table. The students concerned are a problem, in that they have been mis-guided somewhere along the line. But they are probably not in any way disadvantaged, rather the reverse.

Table 2, then, has to be read with these reservations in mind. It shows as far as possible what percentage of those that start post-compulsory education or training either do not complete it or fail to qualify at the end of it

Table 2[9]: **Percentage of entrants -**
leaving post-compulsory education early or without a qualification (Line A)
leaving initial training early or without a qualification (Line B)

	A	B fr	B nl	D	DK	E	F	GR
A	19[1]				18[2]	30	30[3]	17[3]
B	36-47[4] 6[5]	25	28[6]	23	8[7];13 & 36[8]: 24[9]	50[10]		

Source: National reports
No figures supplied for the other countries
Some figures are estimates of recent performance but not related to a specific year. Years given are shown below
Notes: 1 from general education
2 1992
3 1989, % of all leavers at Level VI; V*bis*; and V and IV without certificate
4 from general education
5 from technical-vocational education
6 from apprenticeships
7 first year of vocational secondary education (BSO)
8 from commercial courses
9 from years 1 & 2
10 from HF (see text)
11 from FP1 (see text)

	I	N	NL	P	S	SF	UK
A		8.4				5	30-40[1]
B	30	18[2]; 31[3]	40[4] 50[5]	8[6]	3-5[7] 30[8]	7.6	see A

Source: National reports
No figures supplied for the other countries
Some figures are estimates of recent performance but not related to a specific year. Years given are shown below
Notes: 1 Average of A & B
2 Year 1
3 Year 2
4 mbo (see text)
5 apprenticeships; first phase
6 apprenticeships
7 Lines (see text)
8 Individual programmes (see text)
No figures available for the other countries

[9] country abbreviations as in footnote 2 above

In **Germany**, the percentage of Dual System apprenticeship contracts terminated before the end of regular training has increased continuously since 1988, and now stands at about 25% overall:

50% in the first year
27% in the second, and
23% in the remaining third and fourth years.

There are wide variations between trades: the lowest rates are in training for bank clerk (3.6%) and the highest for painter (49%)

Hence the so-called "Training Deficit". About 14% of young adults aged 20-25 in the west German *Länder* are without formal vocational training diploma or certification, according to studies in 1990-91. 23% of these young people had started training but dropped out or failed

The **Dutch** figure for drop-out from apprenticeship average 50%, but the figure conceals large variations, from 10% to 90% according to sector and branch

In **Denmark**, drop-out, of at least 10%, exists in all types of education for 16-19 year olds. Particular concern is felt about the figures for HF (a 2-year general upper secondary education) which is 24%, and for Technical Training which are 13% and 36% at the end of Years 1 and 2 respectively. Drop-out on commercial courses is lower: 8.8% and 8%. These numbers are quite steady

UK overall figures suggest non-completion rates averaging about 13% for A-level courses and 18% for vocational courses, but when failures are included, the figure is nearer 30-40%. Of the 11% of the age-group who started a Youth Training (YT) course in 1992, many had problems of non-completion; in 1994, only 47% had completed their agreed course of training, though 53% had gained a qualification, or credit towards one

Over half the trainees on FP1 (pre-Reform school-based 2-year vocational training) in **Spain** do not achieve the end-point qualification (assistant technician): most of them have already failed in compulsory school. One of the main aims of FP1 has been to enable pupils to make good the gaps in their basic education left at the end of compulsory school: it clearly has only been succeeding in that to a very limited extent. 75% fail at the first attempt in the first year, and 30% in the second year

A **Luxemburg** study found that 25% of the entrants to the secondary general schools in 1978 were in the technical schools in 1984 - as a result of the selective "cascade" system. And another study (1993) found that, despite the high rate of non-completion of types of secondary and post-secondary schooling, the largest proportion of pupils had left school from a vocational class in a secondary technical school

In **Austria**, by contrast, 46% of the age-group were in apprenticeships in 1993. Drop-out from apprenticeships is very low, about 4-6%; 60% of technical-vocational high school drop-outs are estimated to enter apprenticeships

In **Norway**, of the 31% who drop out at the end of the second year of training (advanced course I) some may have completed their 2-year course; some also go into apprenticeships (6%), mainly boys, since most apprenticeships are in the crafts and mechanical industries. 52% leave education at the end of the third year: it is not known if they achieve final qualifications or not

Those who leave formal education early ie at the end of compulsory school, and those who leave after completing one or two years of upper secondary schooling (a much larger group, totalling 17,000 in 1992) and some others who leave without formal qualifications, made up a total of 19,000 in 1992. Most of these entered the labour market. The apprenticeship system is seen as providing a useful safety net for young people, even though it receives only a small fraction of them (about 4% of the 19-23 year-olds)

In **Sweden**, drop-out from the 16 lines is low; and from the "individual" programmes (see chapter 5) 30%. Of those who had dropped out after the first year of upper secondary in 1989, 4 years later

- 47% had resumed education/training
- 24% were in a permanent job
- 11% were in temporary work
- 8% were unemployed

Drop-out rates in **Finland** are low: from post-compulsory general education 5%, and vocational education and training 8%, mostly in the first year. The lowest rates (about 5%) are in social care and health education courses

3 DEFINING THE TARGET GROUPS

One purpose of school and training is to reduce disadvantage[10], - certainly not to increase it. We aspire to reach an ideal situation where personal and social disadvantages are countered by experience in school and vocational training. Those who do not succeed in reaching even the end of compulsory schooling we perceive to be disadvantaged at the outset of their life. So we can define a first target group for the purposes of this study as

- **those who do not complete, or do not succeed in, compulsory education**.

Those who start the next stage but do not complete it or fail are, as we have seen, very much more varied

- Some can be seen to have been disadvantaged on entry; the reasons for their failure are more or less directly associated with their personal, social and economic background or circumstances: their experience of school and training schooling and training simply failed to enable them to overcome their disadvantages

- A second group are those who might have succeeded, but were let down either by themselves or by the training they went through. They probably had learning difficulties and/or were unsuited to the type and method of training. They too finished up unqualified and at risk

- Many of the "switchers" did not really fail as such: they took a wrong turning and because they dropped out, were counted into the number of those who failed. But many will probably enter the labour market

Our second target group then will best be defined as those who

- **those who fail to obtain a basic vocational qualification in post-compulsory education or training.**

If, in very round figures, we can think of the first group as averaging about 10% of an age-group, it is much harder to estimate the second. The figures show very wide variations: an average of 20% altogether is acceptable as a working estimate.

[10] see Annex 1 for a review of the senses in which disadvantage is defined in the national reports

These definitions[11] concern education as well as training ie the policy responsibilities of both Ministries where responsibility for education and training policy is divided. Some would therefore see the main onus of responsibility for improvement as resting on education, not on training, policies. Others might argue that even educational interventions are of limited value, given that the roots of disadvantage and deprivation lie in failures in other fields of social policy, - poor housing, poor health care, and unemployment, rather than in lack of education. "Schools cannot remedy the ills of society; they just reflect them" as one report put it.

In our view this latter view is too pessimistic. It is as erroneous to think that schools can do nothing as to claim that they can do everything for all young people. This is a report on what schools, colleges and firms are doing to redress disadvantage and secure better opportunities for all young people. The evidence collected is very encouraging: much is being done, and successfully, but there is still much more that schools (and their partners) can and should do, before they can fairly claim that they have exhausted the possibilities for positive action.

[11] It needs to be stressed that both of the target groups thus defined will include a certain number who have personal physical or mental disabilities such that they will be entitled to special provision, under whatever regulations exist for special education and training in each Member State. But the special provision made for them, and its effectiveness, lie outside the scope of this study. Their needs, and the responses to them, are therefore not treated in this report

Chapter 2

The problems and challenges

Introduction

The previous chapter sketched out two distinguishable target groups of young people who fail to qualify, the first in compulsory school, and the second in vocational training/upper secondary school.

In this chapter we review the main causes for their failure as described in the reports.

1 CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS IN THE COMPULSORY SCHOOL

Three problem areas

The problems in compulsory school highlighted in the reports centre on a few areas:

1 the persistence of old-fashioned methods of **teaching and assessment** of pupils' progress, which generate feelings of failure, demotivation and demoralisation

2 the difficulty of adapting the traditional or set **curriculum** to match a much wider diversity of pupils, staying on at school longer than before for various reasons including the extension of compulsory schooling; and the consequent **irrelevance** of much of what is taught to the "real world" (ie the lives and needs) of many pupils

3 the weakness of schools' arrangements for helping young people develop a sense of personal direction, and think about their future, through **guidance**, personal tutoring, and advice about their careers; and the failure to **follow up** those who leave school early and are known to be at risk of leaving the world of education and training altogether, if they have not already done so.

1 Demotivation and failure

Failure lies at the heart of the problem of dropping out:

> The main causes of the "Training Deficit " in **Germany** are seen to be undoubtedly in the compulsory school stage. Studies in 1990-91 reported that "75% of young people without a lower secondary general school diploma had either not begun or not completed vocational training. This shows the major cause for non-commencement or unsuccessful completion of vocational training already exist before leaving the general school system"

The main reasons given were:

- insufficient previous education
- lack of self-confidence due to low achievement during general education
- motivation problems
- insufficient vocational orientation

In countries where repeating is still used, it is increasingly recognised as a major demotivating factor, and steps are being taken to replace it or at least make it more flexible.

Belgium (Flanders) has an unusually high number of repeaters: 18% of children (more boys than girls) have not reached the 6th year of primary school by age 11; by age 17, 39% of those in full-time education have repeated. In **Belgium (Wallonie)** the figure is even higher: 60% repeat at least once during their compulsory education, with big regional variations. A third of an age-group are said to be in effect failed by the school system

Three different studies were carried out in **Portugal** between 1983 and 1992 on the reasons for dropping-out from lower secondary school (CEB). They all showed that failure was the most important cause of drop-out, which mostly occurred at the end of the (3-year) lower secondary stage

In **Luxemburg**, a longitudinal study in 1984 showed that only 19% of pupils managed not to repeat at all in secondary school: 19% repeated one year, 17% 2 years, and 4% 3 or more. 41% of those who entered classical (general) or technical school had not completed their studies there, though they had not necessarily left without any qualification

Loss of motivation is not always the result of being required to repeat: feelings of inferiority can be engendered more indirectly in the classroom:

The **Greek** report spoke of

- teachers and their teaching methods tending to favour the good students; they do not meet the needs of the weaker ones; as a result these pupils have a negative school experience and low self-esteem. They drop out before finishing compulsory school, and have no training opportunities since an entry requirement to all training schemes is a compulsory-school leaving certificate

Remedial classes are of no use when used in an environment which stigmatises learning difficulties:

There are after-hours remedial classes, which are seen to be stigmatising, and have a negative effect on the pupil's self-esteem

Getting rid of the belief in the value of failure in schools is likely to be a long struggle:

"In the **UK**, some consider that the concept of failure is still very much alive: it relates particularly to the academic group; it remains to be seen how far the introduction of GNVQs (the new vocationally-oriented alternative to A-level) can enhance the prestige of vocational education"

In **France**, while the percentage of those leaving school unqualified has fallen from 13% in 1988 to 11% in 1991, those who enter apprenticeships are still likely to have failed in school. The challenge today is to enable apprenticeship to rid itself of the image as the stream for those who have failed in compulsory school

2 Curriculum inflexibility and irrelevance

The combination of more young people staying longer in school and rising expectations and standards has shown up the limitations of the curriculum, and the methods used to teach it. "More of the same" is no answer. Today's new pupils need a different curriculum, and a different learning environment. But often schools lack the freedom, and teachers often lack the expertise and/or the resources, to enable them to adapt their teaching methods to suit the different, wider, clientele:

> In **Germany**, the problems of the lower secondary general school have grown.
>
> Due to the changing aspirations of parents and pupils, more pupils are now undergoing education in intermediate and grammar schools than 10 years back... so that the secondary general schools have to cater for less motivated and less talented pupils
>
> The school environment does not leave enough room to apply innovative teaching and learning methods to cope with the limitations of the target groups, due to group sizes and the lack of non-classroom educational facilities
>
> In **Austria**, "many young people without vocational qualifications confirm having a high degree of school fatigue, which may be due to the fact that present-day instruction and curricula concede too little room to individual strengths and talents, needs and interests; moreover pupils often cannot see a clear relation between the curriculum and practical life"
>
> Among the main causes of drop-out cited in the **Spanish** report were:
>
> - the irrelevance of the school as preparation for life, and its isolation from the cultural and economic life of the community: the lack of contact between teachers and the local community, and the school's lack of concern for the pupils' background and educational progress
>
> - the mismatch between the resource priorities of the schools and the needs of the pupils
>
> - a high rate of teacher turn-over, poor professional esteem, and lack of in-service training to help them adjust their teaching to a wider range of pupils
>
> - too-centralised a curriculum
>
> - lack of extra-curricular projects
>
> - lack of remedial teaching for pupils with learning difficulties

The expectation that all pupils should taste success in compulsory education, including even those who hitherto have generally been sidelined or quietly allowed to leave, presents a new set of problems in coping with negative attitudes and behaviour. How, the **Spanish** report asks, can the ordinary school deal with pupils who have rejected school?

> No traditional curriculum is likely to succeed with them: their talents and the culture of the school are mismatched. Longer schooling (repeating; or remedial classes) are not likely to touch their needs. An "alternative" approach is necessary

The question then arises how far the compulsory school can cope on its own with very difficult pupils? what are the limits? and what happens to those that fall beyond them? We shall be looking at the various "solutions" - or at least approaches - which have been adopted or are being developed, in chapter 3.

Meanwhile some countries are still constructing the places needed in schools for their larger pupil population, so as to avoid double shifts

> In **Portugal**, the roots of school failure are seen to lie in
> - the fact that 75% of the population aged over 15 have only had 6 years schooling: the introduction of compulsory 9-year schooling only began in 1986, and will become general in 1995
> - pre-school only reaches 53% of children
> - there is still a shortage of schools, with double shifts in operation and a shortage of qualified teachers

Almost everywhere, the school populations are becoming more ethnically diverse. The countries of the European Union today are almost all receivers of newcomers from an ever increasing number and variety of countries. The era of economic immigration has evolved into an unforeseeable era of voluntary and involuntary movement of the old and the young towards almost any country that will take them in. The pressures on school and society can be huge, and sometimes seem insoluble

> **Luxemburg** provides a graphic, if extreme, example of the language integration problems of young people from ethnic minorities. It has a trilingual school system: children from the main (Romance-language) sending countries (Italy and Portugal) enter a primary school stage where the language of instruction is Luxemburgish, and must learn German from the second year at an accelerated rate because it is regarded as an easy language for indigenous Luxemburg children to master. The language of the technical secondary schools is German, French being used in only the grammar schools. Consequently, the rate of repeating in the foreign language subject by ethnic minority children in primary school is "massive", at the very outset of their school life, and they are under-represented in all the higher forms of subsequent education and over-represented in the lower forms. However, the tradition of trilingualism in schools is to remain: "it is part of our history and is one of the pillars of our national identity"

3 Inadequate guidance

Although there is absolute unanimity on the importance of guidance at all stages from about the age of 13 onwards, to assist young people's personal development, and their successful transition into training and onto the labour market, an enormous amount still remains to be done to develop acceptable provision of educational and vocational guidance in compulsory schools.

In a world of changing job opportunities, and uncertain career structures, with traditional job opportunities disappearing, and new skill profiles emerging, the role of careers education (ie informing young people about jobs) and developing in them a capacity to envisage their own identity and "*projet de vie*", have grown much more important. The days have gone when, as in eg the UK, "careers" advice was a low-status extra duty that could be given to a teacher with time to spare.

Developing a capacity in the young person, especially in those from families with little educational background themselves, to think seriously about their future, and develop realistic ideas about their career, starting as early as age 12 or 13, has become central to the role of the school. A lot of the curriculum, and out-of-school activities such as short work experience periods, have to be focused on this process.

The difficulties in the way of doing this well are enormous:

- class teachers do not have a wide enough background, often having had little or no experience of the economic world

- few of them are trained in guidance work

- as a "subject", guidance is usually not obligatory, (though **Austria**, **Denmark**, **Norway**, the **Netherlands**, **Spain** and **Sweden** are exceptions), and so runs a risk of being sidelined in the curriculum

- providing information and advice to the class and the individual pupil calls for a lot of cooperation between the teachers and guidance specialists; in many cases there are still too few such specialists or even none atall; and in most countries, there is still little experience of how to make this cooperation work well (though there are exceptions: the **Nordic** countries, **France** and **Germany** especially)

- where the youngsters have been demoralised by failure in school, restoring their confidence in themselves and interest in their future involves more than just giving information or steering them into a vocational avenue: their parents may be actively opposing the efforts of the school, not supporting them

- the guidance process itself may have to be rethought and teachers trained or retrained for it. The widespread practice whereby "*orientation*" was used in secondary school to select those unsuitable for academic courses and direct them to technical/vocational ones is still not dead, though officially condemned

- the generalisation of work experience does not appear to have been matched by an ability on the part of schools and teachers to exploit it effectively. As with alternance[12] arrangements in full-time vocational training, the involvement of two (or more) partners in the work experience means that a lot of planning and coordination is needed to ensure good use of the pupil's time: clear objectives, preparation, and follow-up of the work experience period are often absent, so that much of the value of the event is often lost.

The **Dutch** report highlighted some other general limitations in the way the guidance function is operated at school level. More attention needs to be given to:

- telling students and parents about the labour market prospects and/or drop-out rates for particular courses
- finding out what happens to ex-students from each course
- finding out what employers think about the strengths and weaknesses of new employees, so as to be able to adjust courses accordingly

[12] ie alternating periods of in-firm practical work with periods of in-school/college theoretical study

- finding out what ex-students themselves thought about their course as a preparation for their job or their subsequent course

- finding out what the teachers who receive the students at the next stage think about the way pupils were prepared for it

In the **UK**, it is recognised that there is a case for giving young people a great deal of information earlier than at present: many pupils choose their subjects for their GCSE (16+ examinations) blindly, yet these choices are major decisions. Many TEC (local training council) directors regard the provision of earlier careers advice as top priority for the Careers Service and additional resources have now been provided for this in the current year

But the deficiencies and difficulties persist:

- ***variation***: although most secondary schools now have a careers coordinator, a written policy statement and a good careers library, and many, (but by no means all) schools have a written policy statement for careers education and guidance, only one third provide more than 20 hours a year of careers education in Year 11 (age 15/16) and fewer in Year 10 (age 14/15)

- ***teacher training in careers education***: the latest reforms allow time for careers education, if the head thinks it is important, but staff still need to be trained, not only about local labour markets but also to teach personal skills. The Careers Service (ie non-school-based guidance specialists) are to be brought into the schools at an earlier stage of the pupil's school-life, to remedy this

Studies in **Austria** have shown "amazing gaps and wrong judgments especially on the relation between qualifications and job opportunities", as well as on the relationship between qualifications and job satisfaction. Parents in disadvantaged groups are less capable of helping their children. Expansion of counselling in compulsory education about vocational and continuing training is "urgently needed"

In **Greece**, although School Vocational Guidance (SEP) has been incorporated into the school curriculum, it has not yet reached its full potential since in most schools it is implemented by untrained teachers

Guidance still has a bad name to live down in some countries, as the instrument of relegation early on in a pupil's secondary school life:

In the past, in **France**, the less able/motivated pupil would be channelled (through the process of selection or "*orientation*" at the end of the second year of secondary school) into one of a variety of relegation or lower-level streams

- vocational education courses which led to one of two basic vocational qualifications (CEP, CAP)

- a catching-up, or remedial, pre-vocational class (CCPN)

- pre-apprenticeship classes (CPA)

This practice was formally abolished in 1992, when the third year of *collège* became the first year of selection. Nonetheless it remains the case today that

- much of the technical and vocational education sector is still seen as inferior because its intake is the result of a process of progressive selection (ie the cascade effect); and this weakness has become more evident as the tendency to stay longer in school has intensified

- apprenticeship continues to receive those who have failed, despite efforts to give it improved standing

Box 2 State Training Schemes	Ireland
Scheme	**%**
Apprenticeship	16
Teamwork	5
Enterprise Scheme	1
Teagasc Certificate in farming (part-time)	4
Skill Foundation Programme	11
Adult Training	9
Community Youth Training Programme	12
Community Training Workshops	8
Unemployed Training programme	1
Youthreach	7
Craft/Management Courses (long duration)	22
Other	3
Not in training	4

The efforts of guidance may be vitiated by the system of initial training and qualification. It may be very difficult to convince a young person of the value of a course which "leads nowhere"

> In **Ireland** too many of the out-of-school, and some of the in-school, vocational courses still do not have adequate certification arrangements, especially those for disadvantaged youth. There is inadequate course quality control and inadequate certification arrangements

The addition of "labour market measures" ie short vocational training courses targeted at the young unemployed (see Annex 8) may result in obscuring the pathways through the system, especially when there is no obvious sequence in their structuring

> Box 2 shows the range offered in **Ireland** through the various State Training Schemes

Systems have also been found to offer too much specialisation too early:

> Foundation courses in upper secondary school were too specialised, according to the recent Blegen Commission in **Norway**: 110 different first-year courses were available; of these 60 were preparing for craft or industrial occupations and the high specialisation in the first year left too few options open for choice during the second and third years

> In **Italy** as part of *Progetto 92* hundreds of specialised qualifications have been reorganised into 17 types of broad-based certificates

The remoteness of the school from the local community has already been touched on as a weakness affecting the value of the curriculum. The school's lack of contact with the families of its pupils is liable to undermine its guidance work too. Intentionally or not, families may be undermining the efforts of the school to encourage its pupils to enter training

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Problems at home are often cited as one of the reasons for drop-out: in **Greece**, for instance, most weak students do not have the home pressure to succeed or the supervision of their parents to catch up in the school, and family illiteracy and poverty are included among the reasons for not staying on to enter training

2 CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS IN INITIAL TRAINING

Preparing for life-time learning

The basic message here is that training systems, initial and continuing, have to assist industry to respond faster and better to market change. Partnership, decentralisation, modularisation, broader initial training - they are all necessary parts of a leaner, more responsive, system.

So there is general agreement in the reports that much more attention has to be paid to "key skills" and "learning to learn", because *initial* training is not a complete training, but rather the basis for *life-time* learning. Consequently, any job-specific content has to be broad:

According to the **German** "Concept for Action" (1994), three kinds of abilities and knowledge distinguish the new training requirements:

- basic technical knowledge and skills needed in various vocations/work fields eg knowledge of process control engineering and basic knowledge of cost-benefit thinking even in technical jobs
- work-method and technology-related skills and knowledge eg accomplishing planning and organisational tasks
- personal ie social, intellectual and motivational skills and abilities eg cooperation, self-reliance, creativity, ability to understand things in context, willingness to continue learning

What is particularly significant for this study, in **Germany**, is the expected decline in job opportunities for those without a vocational qualification: the fall here is expected to be from the current figure of 26% of the labour force to about 13% in 2010. Even now it is clear that those with completed vocational training are much less affected by unemployment than are the unskilled or semi-skilled, who have an unemployment rate of around 14% in the "old" *Länder* three times that of skilled workers (29% in the "new" *Länder*, twice that of skilled workers)

In **Austria**, completion of compulsory schooling is no longer a sufficient qualification to enter the job market: beyond the formal legal requirement, an informal requirement has become evident, which includes courses of continuing training and education. Nor is initial vocational training any longer a guarantee for a life-long activity in the occupation for which one was trained. The job-finding process is rather a process of many years, comprising not only one's initial vocational training but also a number of retraining and further training courses which are necessary requisites for safeguarding one's future chances in the working world

The spirit of training also has to shift: away from training to be an employee, towards entrepreneurial and creative skills.

Although a basic training qualification for all has become official policy in some countries, and is discussed as a right in others, the need for it is not quite universally agreed:

In **Denmark**, the social partners take divergent views, the trade unions organisation (LO) saying it is important "to create space...for everybody" and the DA (the Employers Association) having a clear perception that "the vocational education and training system cannot comprise all young people. Some of them cannot manage, and there must be other offers available for them."

Some governments are concerned too - though the problem really lies outside the scope of this study - about the lack of vocational orientation in the post-compulsory (16-18) courses of many of those heading towards university:

In the **Netherlands** general education courses (mavo, havo, vwo) now attract as many as 80% at age 14: the government is concerned about the tendency for pupils to "stack" courses, or take a "detour" through the secondary course system eg "havo-mbo-hbo", ie spending time in the general secondary tracks before settling into one of the less theoretical vocational courses

In the **UK**, broad-based vocational courses (GNVQs) are being introduced, intended to provide both a route to further vocational training and an alternative route to higher education, perhaps in conjunction with some A-level courses (in England) or Highers (in Scotland)

The **Austrian** report notes "an urgent need to expand job-oriented education and training programmes on a post-secondary level". Matura-holders can already train in the apprenticeship system with a shortened apprenticeship period

In 1993, an Act was passed to set up "*Fachhochschulen*" (specialised colleges of higher education) to give Matura-holders, whether graduates of technical or vocational schools or apprenticeships, job-oriented and practice-specific educational opportunities, as an alternative to long-term university studies. In the pilot scheme, covering 85 occupations, some were particularly popular: book-seller, hotel and restaurant assistant, motor vehicle mechanic, and joiner

In **Germany**, the proportion of grammar school graduates who entered an apprenticeship in the Dual System before, or instead of, proceeding to higher education rose from 4% in 1975 to 15% in 1990

Concern is felt in **Austria** and **Luxemburg** about the length of time graduates take to complete their university studies, with some dropping out: about 6 years on average, though they are often employed at the time. A **Luxemburg** study notes that about 50% of those who leave university have not completed a full course

The image of technical-vocational training

Whether the fault lies with the school and its teachers or outside in society at large (or in industry in particular), there is a problem over the attractiveness of technical-vocational careers and training. The problem can be seen, and explained, in various ways:

The **Dutch** report reflects the views of a number of countries: it quotes a recent study which points out that there is a major problem in the way of improving recruitment into technical and vocational education and training

"Parents and young people do not assess the general and vocational education and training tracks as equally attractive. They see general education as providing esteem and a good basis for tertiary level education or training but not too good employment prospects. The reverse is true for vocational education: generally good employment prospects but less status

Also the options within the vocational training system are not assessed as equal:

- technology offers good employment prospects
- the care and service sector courses offer esteem and status
- economics and office-related courses offer the best basis for continued training"

In **Denmark**, concern is felt about the proportion (now as high as 46%) choosing general upper secondary education, which has been accompanied by a corresponding fall in the proportion choosing vocational (ie technical and commercial) education

Part of the problem lies in the compulsory school. Good teachers want to do the best for their pupils. This (naturally) means very often that they wish their pupils should enjoy the chances and experience that they themselves had. This is not likely to have been a technical-vocational education experience. It may well also not be the best career for the child. Getting out of this closed circle of the world of the teacher's experience and horizons is a problem for the compulsory school.

Parents too want "the best" for their children, and tend to encourage them towards general education. But aiming for the highest can be a risky choice: reaching the top is becoming harder and the employment chances are not so good. In the **Netherlands**, government has a policy on this called "The right pupil in the right place".

Elsewhere the balance is not seen as problematical

In **Sweden** the recent reform has simplified and reduced the number of upper secondary specialisations or "lines" to 16, all of which are to be 3 years in length by 1996. Apart from the high transfer figures

- almost half (45%) the upper secondary school pupils were studying on 3 or 4 year theoretical lines
- the 3-year vocational lines are gaining in popularity over the 2-year
- interest in the 2-year lines has remained fairly constant

In **Finland**, although the majority of those who continue after compulsory education continue in general education, the vocational pathway is no dead-end, and students have an opportunity to continue up to university studies after finishing vocational education. The image of vocational education, especially the blue-collar worker, is of course lower than the image of general education

In **Austria** "the main winner from the growth in staying on in the last 20 years has been the 5-year technical and vocational high school", now taking 20% of graduations in 1993

In **Italy** the 1500 *Istituti Professionali di Stato* (IPS) had 534,000 students in 1992/93, and have maintained their share of the total students in upper secondary schooling since 1989. Some of these are drop-outs from other streams. Success rates have risen too: about 9% of the 16-17 age-group qualified in an IPS in 1980; now the figure is 33%

So are there signs that vocational training may manage to rid itself of its traditional low-status, even negative, image? The signs are encouraging, but it will take more time.

"Until the end of the 80s, the **Luxemburg** school system was dominated by the belief that high quality education had to be transmitted by a "*clair et étroit ruisseau d'excellence*" without which society would make no progress and which must not be diluted." Only a small élite could benefit from it: it determined the nature of all schooling, which therefore emphasised the theoretical, whether scientific or literary

Thus at the outset of lower secondary schooling, failure - of varying degree - had to be the fate of the majority: technical education was valued for its similarity to grammar-school education, and could never be more than second-rate: parents have always wanted their children to enter grammar school, irrespective of the child's ability or interests, and equally regardless of the real opportunities to be gained by having attended one of the other school types. Pupils who could not pass the exam to enter either the grammar or the technical had to go into "*enseignement complémentaire*". With a very mixed set of pupils, and no

> qualification target to aim for, this was the abyss of compulsory schooling, to which all descended who could not make it elsewhere

Opting for a vocational course in secondary school can even now act as a bar to continuing into apprenticeship in **Ireland**:

> A significant proportion of apprentices and those entering post-school vocational training are selected on the basis of their grade levels in their general (academic) education courses. Those who took the vocational-technical options at that level often do not score well enough to be accepted. Particularly where candidates vary very little in their grades, it is a wholly inappropriate selection mechanism

Where technical schools are separated from vocational schools, they often enjoy a high and distinctive reputation. But in **Greece**, as elsewhere, the technical world is seen as inferior to "noble", non-practical, occupations

> In **Greece**, the preference of students to go to university rather than enter a technical university (TEI) is a major problem: disappointed applicants go to universities abroad and to a new range of private (mostly technical-vocational) colleges which have sprung up since 1990. Drop-out from TEI is high (50%) and only 5% reach the end of their course in the intended period. It is at this population of students, who fail to enter technical/vocational courses after completing compulsory school and upper secondary school, that the new system of Institutes of Vocational Training is mainly aimed

> These students suffer as a result of the "thirst" for μορφώσις (general education), and receive poor advice from their family and little or none from society. So far as education and training policy is concerned the roots of the problem lie in the guidance system of the school which "has not yet reached its full potential since in most schools it is implemented by untrained-teachers". Difficulties also lie in the lack of effective connections between the different parts of the education and training system or the lack of a total system approach

A clear, progressive and fair qualification system

Most of the existing systems of initial (and continuing) vocational training have restricted or "normal" levels of entry and ages of entry, based on the traditional pattern of progression of a young person through school, into qualifying training, and so to work and adulthood. The unsuitability of these systems is now apparent on several counts:

- they fail too many trainees, for various reasons (see Box 4 on "drop-out")

- they are too inflexible to provide for the diversity of entrants who now need to be trained

- they do not permit fast enough revision of content to respond to changes in industrial requirements

- they need to be integrated with systems of adult learning/training, in a combined comprehensive framework of credit accumulation which can also cater for intermittent study, distance learning, and other non-conventional forms of learning and qualification.

The inflexibility and lack of transparency of some existing systems of provision and qualification have been intensified by the addition of all sorts of emergency measures

introduced under employment policy to give young people some form of training and work experience by way of relief from unemployment and to reorient them towards the labour market. The result is often an alphabet soup of programmes, initiatives etc. Quality control and certification of value on the labour market are vital.

> Certification is an important issue in **Ireland**. Too many of the out-of-school and some in-school vocational courses still do not have adequate certification arrangements, especially those for disadvantaged young people

> The need for a national system of qualifications, generally recognised and standardised, is seen as a major gap in **Spain**

The efforts of some countries to rationalise and modernise their initial training provision, and to develop introduce something resembling a total "system" is dealt with in chapter 5. Some of the new measures, such as the Production Schools in Denmark will surely prove to be of lasting value, - desirable additions to the range of provision. Others perhaps need to be more critically assessed so as to produce a more streamlined and transparent system.

To attract the full range of applicants into training, systems need be clear, progressive, and equitable in the sense of offering fair rewards for time and effort invested. Only then will all young people find the "pathway" that suits them.

Shortage of training places

Apprenticeship and alternance systems depend for their success on a sufficient number of training places or work experience placements being available. As alternance training spreads, the willingness of firms to offer such places (and to ensure they are attractive to trainees) becomes an essential part of the training system in more and more countries.

The supply depends on

> - what compensation is available to employers for the investment involved. Not all sectors, as for example in the **Netherlands,** will have a collective training fund or are aware of the terms offered
>
> - what cooperative agreements have been reached for on-the-job training or training in simulated jobs/workplaces.

The German Dual System was put under strain with the onset of the oil-price recession and high numbers of young people coming out of compulsory education in the 1970s-80s. Major efforts had to be made to increase the supply of training places, and other measures introduced to help young people waiting for one. Similar difficulties faced **Denmark** recently

> After a difficult period, in **Germany**, the supply, though suffering from regional disparities and shortages in specific trades has nearly kept pace with demand in the "old" *Länder*, though there are signs that larger companies will further reduce their places in the future. In the "new" *Länder*, demand exceeds supply, with many having to accept "preparatory measures" while waiting for a place

> Alternance is regarded eg in **Denmark** with universal approval as the right way to train young people. But until recently there was a prolonged shortage of practice places which has made it impossible for many

students to complete their training programmes. Its effect is also to deter young people from entering initial vocational training or "discourage those who have actually started the school period of vocational training from continuing if they cannot find a placement, and so to make the drop-out rate increase"

In the **Netherlands** there has been a decrease of about 20% in the last 2 years in new take-up in the apprenticeship system but growing demand as a result of the "A vocational qualification for all" policy aim, producing applications by young people, unemployed adults, women reentering the labour market, and immigrants

Similar problems arise with the extension of vocational training in the **Swedish** reform; and in the planned expansion of vocational training in **Spain**. The willingness of employers to offer places is also a constraint on the working of vocational training in the **UK**, and an important role for the new TECs is to persuade them to increase the supply

The underlying causes of the shortage are structural as well as cyclical:

In **Germany**, manufacturing employment has declined and will do so further from roughly 40-45% to 33% by 2010; agricultural from some 9% to 2%, with the service sector rising from 45/57% (old/new *Länder*) to about 66%

In-plant training opportunities in **Germany** have been reduced as "lean production" methods are used: in 1993 places fell by 29,000 in the private sector alone. One result is a much greater difficulty in matching demand to supply in particular occupations, - or, in other words, of giving young people the specific occupational training they wish to take up

Substitute work-practice arrangements based in schools, are much criticised, (eg by both employers and trade unions in **Denmark**). But unions generally take the view that they are a great deal better then denying young people all access to training and qualification. Indeed the experience of running them may contribute to better understanding of how to get the best out of traditional practice places or even apprenticeships.

Voluntary sector suppliers of such places are a key part of the training provision for the disadvantaged in some countries. Their budgets are not always top priority:

UK "government expenditure on training is falling: a survey found that the amount spent per trainee in the voluntary sector fell by 7% between 1993/4 and 1994/5, even though, within higher participation rates, more of the government trainees are in some sense disadvantaged. 16% of providers in the voluntary sector, who are the main providers of training for such people had had their total training cut by half for the present year (1994/5), and many more "were stated to be in financial jeopardy... Changes in funding and funding policies have weakened many of the bodies in the voluntary sector concerned with particular disadvantaged groups"

A structural gap

The need to lengthen and strengthen compulsory education has created a problem for the lower-achieving pupil in regard to gaining a basic vocational qualification. Compulsory schooling no longer provides one, and for these pupils formal vocational training is too long and too difficult. What is missing is a recognised qualification and formal training track for semi-skilled worker ("assistent" or SEDOC-1) in the labour market. The absence of a solution also contributes to some girls leaving the school system unqualified.

In several countries the gap has been bridged by a wide range of alternatives see Box 3: a growing number of "grey" courses without proper quality standards, recognised certification, proper financial basis, or - most important of all perhaps - any entitlement (credit) which

Box 3 Why do we have so much "alternative" provision?

"Alternative" is a much-used word in education and training, because of pressures of various kinds on too-rigid systems and their out-dated requirements

It is used to mean several quite different, though related, things:

- at a different level
  - eg alternative courses established at a level lower than the normal and perhaps unrecognised as a result, though realistic for some young people
- under different conditions
  - eg normal or adapted courses provided in a regular school but under special conditions eg supported by remedial teaching
- in a different non-traditional, non-school, style of provision
  - eg production-based learning provided in an alternative-style institutions, under special conditions (teachers, buildings, amount of support and guidance, etc)

A continuum could be set up to locate different alternatives in their distance from mainstream provision

An important question is how far some kind of alternative is necessary for a well-functioning system able to offer all young people a chance to qualify; and how far some of the present alternatives are just temporary solutions to problems generated by too-rigid systems

would assist the young person to move up to a higher level subsequently. Such measures gave proliferated in all sectors: compulsory school provision, post-compulsory training, adult provision, and all kinds of employment services measures. Informal and unrecognised training has negative effects: it is provided on the part of the labour market where jobs are unstable and dead-end. Employment is precarious, and employers change frequently, so, since any training provided carries no recognition, a trainee with a new employer will have to start again at the beginning (hence the "training nomads", comparable with the "hard core" observed in the *Missions Locales*, see Annex 6) .

Creation of recognised training at this level are seen by some as an important need if "comprehensive pathway" systems (or "patchwork quilts") are to be constructed, bridging effectively between compulsory school and post-compulsory education and training.

Many of the "preparatory" and "stepping stone" measures described in chapter 4 can be seen as trying to fill this gap, without creating a new or intermediate (half-way) level of recognised qualification. The need for "partial credit", discussed above, is also relevant.

Family matters

Studies of pupils transferring to post-compulsory education and training show the difficulties faced at this stage by those who had had problems already in compulsory school, especially those who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Even where the transfer rate is high, the family educational history strongly tends to repeat itself: young people whose parents had a

profession demanding a long education themselves tend to choose the long theoretical-academic courses and those that lead on to further studies in higher education; and those with parents who had a shorter education tend to choose the shorter vocational courses

> For **Belgium (Wallonie)**, the profile of the drop-out is of a pupil who is over-age (ie has repeated a lot), is in technical-vocational school, and comes from a large family where the parents have had little education and are on a low income
>
> In **Norway** there is a strong relationship between socio-economic background and choice of option: 60% of children with university-educated parents chose the main path to higher education in 1980, but only 20% of children of unskilled workers
>
> A **Swedish** survey of transfer showed that
>
> > - those who had received remedial teaching in Year 9 (and would receive it throughout upper secondary school) were less likely to transfer directly: 3 years after finishing compulsory school, 25% of them had still not started upper school, and interruptions in their studies were more common than for other pupils
> >
> > - 66% of those who did not continue directly had parents "who were not skilled workers, unskilled workers or lower grade office workers"
> >
> > - 20% of those who started their upper secondary studies later than one term, interrupted their studies, - many more than the average

There are also local or regional patterns of demand and supply: particular branches of training are often not available or not in sufficient quantity in remote areas: in some countries many manual occupations continue to be filled by young people without qualifications

> In **Norway** the fisheries have often employed unskilled workers in the sense of people without formally-recognised skills; the workers are informally trained

Reasons for dropping-out

The **Danish** Ministry has set up a special Unit to tackle drop-out, and is running a campaign to the end of 1994 to reduce it. It carried out an analysis by 100 educational and vocational counsellors, on the reasons for drop-out. The list in Box 4 groups the reasons identified in its survey along with causes cited in other national reports in the present study are set out in Box 4 below. Some students' views were obtained.

Views about who is most to blame for the high dropping-out rates vary from one set of actors to another. Employers, for example, may say that 4 years of training is too much for some young people. The government may say that the fault lies with the lack of responsiveness of the training system to the needs of the labour market; and that teaching needs to be more holistic, integrating general and vocational subjects better. They may also blame employers for not providing enough, or good enough, training in the work-place. Unions tend to criticise the government for inadequate funding of the schools. There is increasing recognition of the need for a combined approach, whatever differences of view there may be on implementation - especially as regards the allocation of the cost of additional provision. Chapter 6 sets out some of the developments in this area.

Box 4 The reasons for dropping out of vocational training

1 Problems due to poor compulsory education

- ***content problems***: academic demands of training too high
- ***immaturity***: lack of self-discipline among the trainees
- ***guidance***: unrealistic student evaluations of their own capabilities and vocational ambitions, and insufficient educational and vocational guidance in compulsory school and the introductory phase of vocational school
- ***failure in compulsory education***: young people's poor motivation because of frustrating experiences in compulsory/general schools

2 Problems within the vocational training schools

- ***poor learning conditions***, workshops, canteens, transport to school
- ***teacher-related:*** inadequate teacher-pupil ratio, poor teaching standards, teacher qualifications insufficient to cope with low-achievers
- lack of ***social and cultural provision*** for the trainees; lack of "empowerment" in college
- ***curriculum/guidance***: not enough support provided to help weaker trainees during training

3 Problems within firms

- ***quantitative***: shortage of practice placements
- ***qualitative***: lack of training support by in-plant trainers, and poor coordination with the school
- ***qualifications***: no formal qualifications available for lower levels of skills
- ***lack of follow up***: firms not under enough pressure to see that early school leavers enter training or jobs with training

4 Personal/social problems

- ***family and personal problems*** especially in the transition phase between compulsory school and vocational college; lack of support by parents; transport difficulties in reaching college, etc
- ***financial pull***: young people's wish to be financially independent, against a background of family difficulties, reducing their will to stay in training if employment becomes available
- ***job pull***: where there are skill shortages, especially for skilled workers

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> In **Austria** there is discussion whether more time should be spent by apprentices in vocational school, to improve or make up for their lack of general subject knowledge and so less time be spent in the firm. The employers resist the idea of "despecialisation" of the vocational schools. The variety and emphasis on practical training at present is seen as one of the competitive advantages of the Austrian system

"Start early" is a common conclusion. The later the child's difficulties are addressed, the longer it will take, and the less the chances of success. The limitations of the regular vocational training system's ability to cope with, and "repair", the deficiencies and problems of some young people is stressed in the **Swedish** report:

> Despite the high transfer rate in **Sweden**, "all too many pupils leave compulsory school with little knowledge and lacking both self-confidence and a desire to continue their studies. At best, some of the deficiencies can be "repaired" at the beginning of the upper secondary school, but in many cases such a solution does not work for either the pupil or the system. The problem is exclusion as a result of maladjustment...because of severe shortcomings in their basic education....Such maladjustment may be to society, not just learning..."
>
> In a society which can be expected more and more to demand continuous, life-long learning, such deficiencies are of course disastrous. "Basic to a successful system is the principle that the post-compulsory (in this case, upper secondary school) should be available for, and preferably attended by, all pupils".
>
> "As we (in **Sweden**) have seen, in more and more countries, those without an upper secondary education have very slim chances of inserting themselves into further education or the labour market. It is therefore essential that a very high proportion of young people want to go on and complete their upper secondary school education. This is much more important than the precise orientation of their studies"

It is also clear that **content** problems and difficulties with **guidance** support in vocational training itself are partly to blame

> In **Austria**, the problem is seen to lie as much in the content of the training on offer; higher satisfaction by apprentices with their work would be a good point to aim for: "defects in the dual system and in intermediate and higher technical and vocational schools are already known to compulsory school pupils through informal channels and influence their vocational choice to an extraordinary extent"
>
> In **Luxemburg**, although the group with the worst problems of integration into the labour market are undoubtedly the unqualified, the number of unemployed among those with qualifications is seen to be increasing. It is clear that one reason for this is the obsolescence of some of the qualifications which young people are obtaining: 50% of firms in one survey reported problems in recruiting qualified personnel, but only 10% related to those with basic qualifications
>
> For **Greece**, "the education system has a responsibility to combat peripheral inequality, and the trend to urbanisation by encouraging the retention of rural populations in the countryside, through retraining and vocational orientation"

And how far is the actual system of alternance to blame? There is no doubt that the working of all arrangements for training divided between school and firm is an area where improvement could be made. On the positive side of eg apprenticeship arrangements, there is at least evidence from many sides that suggests that satisfaction and motivation are higher in vocational learning - and employment prospects too in some cases:

> **Swedish** evaluations in the 1970s and 80s found that pupils completing study lines with a vocational orientation consistently expressed their satisfaction with the education they had received: it had given them a sense of "being able to do something". Pupils at upper secondary school on the lines preparing for further studies were generally not as satisfied with their education. (But) ...as the economy needs more theoretical learning in all types of courses, and if the majority of pupils are to be affected by the change, "schools must

be capable of making the relationship between the practical and the theoretical parts work very much better than at present"

Irish experience is similar. Those taking vocational-technical courses in their full-time secondary education both have better employment records, and express much higher levels of satisfaction with their education, than those who took the general academic pass-level courses. In other words for those not going on to third level education and who enter the labour market direct from second-level school, taking a vocational-technical specialty (for males) is a highly satisfactory option

Dutch evaluations have also shown how collaborative arrangements, providing training places or simulated training places, can motivate early school leavers to continue in education or training

In **Sweden**, the educational backgrounds which produced the highest unemployment figures in the period 1990 to 1993 were

- compulsory school only
- the humanistic line
- the social science line
- the sociology line
- the economics line
- the distribution and clerical services line
- the building and construction line
- the workshop line.

Unemployment among these groups was higher throughout the whole period (though the quality of the data is such that no far-reaching conclusions should be drawn)

In **Greece** the highest rate of unemployment is among graduates from general secondary and tertiary education: a degree no longer ensures entry into the labour market so that young people seek a second one, or a European Social Fund-financed course: the lowest rate is among young people with postgraduate diplomas, and skilled workers ie graduates from OAED (the National Vocational Training Organisation) apprenticeship courses, and vocational courses of the Ministry of Education and the technical/vocational high schools

Women and men

The problem of unequal access, whether for formal/legal reasons or problems of supply, social pressure, or other reasons, is a recurring theme in most of the reports.

Box 5 Equal opportunities on the computer? **Finland**

"One of the tasks of the comprehensive school is to make students have the ability to understand technology and to use it.

In the comprehensive school, students without any regard to sex must have the chance to acquaint themselves with technology"

The pattern of female education, access to initial training, and employment/unemployment is ironic: girls tend to achieve better at school than boys but do not enjoy the same access to training, level of employment, or financial reward. They have lower access in general, but especially to technical and vocational training. They therefore tend to be trained less, and for

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less rewarding occupations, and then to face worse unemployment because the supply of jobs in the sectors for which they have been trained is insufficient:

> In the **Netherlands** in 1992 70% of the women in employment were working in 10 out of the 85 employment categories. Over-supply in these sectors reduces demand by women for more training
>
> In **Belgium (Flanders)** the number of poorly-educated males in the workforce is higher than that of poorly-educated females. But young women are over-represented in the unemployed after leaving school. Prospects for women leaving lower vocational secondary education (eg clothing and care subjects) are especially poor
>
> In **Austria**, "women without vocational training or education are hardest hit by unemployment". More women complete the "Matura" than go into apprenticeships, unlike the boys, 51% of whom reach the last year of apprenticeships; but more girls also leave with only compulsory education
>
> In **Finland**, women make up over half (56%) of those in vocational education overall but there are marked differences between branches

On the other hand, the personal and interpersonal skills at which girls excel better than boys (communicating, team-working, networking) are some of the ones which the employers are saying they need more than in the past. So, in the words of a recent review, "the future should be female"? - if only girls could claim their share:

> An **Austrian** study on mathematics and girls showed that "Lack of self-confidence and one-sided vocational guidance" are related, so that, of high-achievers in school mathematics, only half as many girls as boys expressed a wish to use their maths in their future occupations

In that case, it may in the longer term be the male who faces the greater problems. But at present gender-typing and gender discrimination still stand in the way of equality of opportunity in most countries. There is a long way to go, and a clear need for exchange of experience and example to give more impetus to change.

Chapter 3

Improving compulsory education

Introduction

The previous chapter identified three main problem areas in the functioning of the compulsory school

1 ***Demotivation***
2 ***Curriculum inflexibility***
3 ***Inadequate guidance***

This chapter describes reforms/measures/innovations under way which address each of them:

1 ***Tackling failure at its roots***

2 ***Curriculum variation***
  2a More-vocational curricula
  2b "Adapted" and "alternative" education

3 ***Guidance and vocational orientation***
  3a Vocational orientation through the curriculum
  3b Better guidance services

4 ***Area-based interventions***

5 ***A successful synthesis in Denmark***

TACKLING FAILURE AT ITS ROOTS

General reforms of compulsory school

The number of countries engaged in substantial, or even total, reforms of their compulsory education systems, is considerable (**Belgium**, **Ireland**, **Norway**, the **Netherlands**, **Portugal**, **Spain**, **Sweden**, the **UK**). Most of them concern the secondary stage of compulsory education.

In the space of this report it is impossible to do justice to the reforms under way, even though it is clear that their aims and measures are highly relevant to reaching the goals implicit in this study, that as near as possible all young people should "pass" in compulsory school and qualify in some form of vocational training. It must suffice to indicate the main features common to them all, or most of them, and these are set out in Box 6. Specific aspects of closer relevance to the study are described later in this chapter.

Box 6 Characteristics of many current reforms of compulsory school

1 Emphasis on teaching required curriculum core subjects, but also on the need to offer time for options, typically for 20% of school-time

2 Emphasis on diversification/individualisation of content and teaching/learning methods to engage pupils' interest, and the use of local teaching/learning opportunities/resources; use of a variety of teaching materials of varying degrees of difficulty

3 Emphasis on activity-based learning, and use of group-work to teach young people to learn to cooperate as well as to compete with each other

4 Emphasis on learning how to learn ie to learn without a teacher, independently

5 A "district approach" to partnership with the local community; use of human and physical resources outside the school for teaching/learning; "*classes vertes*"

6 Assessment that is formative and ipsative as well as summative

7 Requirement that guidance be included either as part of the curriculum or as a cross-curricular theme; and for recognition of its importance in the structure of the school eg as a separate "subject" department

8 Inclusion of cross-subject (or inter-disciplinary) themes

In **Ireland** reforms in the last five years have included

- the introduction of a wider choice of levels, and greater subject integration, in the lower secondary school curriculum
- extra resources for disadvantaged schools, especially in disadvantaged urban areas
- rapid expansion of the Home-School-Community Liaison programme, in both primary and secondary schools in disadvantaged areas
- introduction of the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) as an alternative to the ordinary Leaving Cert programme; and a new more integrated, cross-disciplinary version of the Leaving Cert in 1993/94 (the Leaving Cert Applied Programme)

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- establishing a National Council for Vocational Awards to provide and assess vocational courses in schools and post-school training

The positive changes seen in the **French** comprehensive secondary schools (*collèges*) in the past 10 years are seen as mainly attributable to

- the 80% target being set for the Vocational Baccalaureates by 2000, thereby raising sights all round on the need to help pupils stay longer in vocational training, and progress up to this level
- less premature labelling, or selective grouping, of pupils: changes in the way "*orientation*" (guidance) is used mean that pupils may no longer be "*orienté*" (guided) in the second year of secondary school into separate low-level courses
- the widening of admission to the apprenticeship system

There have also been a variety of responses to the realisation of the extent of failure and the number of young people "in difficulty"

- the use of ***assessment as the basis for more individualised learning***: started in the early 1980s and generalised from 1989, assessment of each pupil's basic skills on entry to *collège* has enabled teachers to adapt the curriculum to the pupil's needs and arrange remedial teaching where needed
- a ***slower-paced curriculum***: the *collège* curriculum consists of two 2-year phases (*cycles*) but one can be lengthened into 3 years where necessary without it being treated as repeating
- ***tutoring***, to improve supervision and support of the pupil's progress, in activities in school and out-of-school
- ***area-based positive discrimination***: the ***ZEPs***, ie *Zones d'Education Prioritaires* (Educational Priority Areas) have been established (see section 4 of this chapter and Box 16 below)

In **Belgium (Flanders)**, the introduction of a "joint first grade" (the first year after transfer to secondary school) is enabling

- pupils who are "have lagged behind in primary school or who are less suited to theoretical teaching" to follow an adapted course so that they can catch up. After that they may start the first year, or move into the vocational preparatory year
- extra help for immigrant pupils. As many as 11% of pupils are in this alternative, and according to inspectors, more should be in it. Those in it are very heterogeneous and the staff require special teaching skills

About half the vocational secondary schools are involved in one or more of the reform projects, launched during the 1980s, though during the period, the extra teaching facilities which the government originally awarded have dwindled drastically. But pupil-oriented teaching and the use of an open curriculum have had a positive effect on the welfare of pupils

In **Belgium (Wallonie)** the first (three-year) cycle of lower secondary schooling (in general and technical schools) was reformed in 1993-94, along the lines of Box 6 with an emphasis on postponing any formal assessment to the end of the cycle

For **Spain**, the new 1990 law (*Ley de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo*, LOGSE) on the reform of the compulsory school has introduced new strategies in the secondary school (ESO, 12-16 years) to combat school failure

- curriculum diversification to match pupils' different interests and aptitudes
- the use of options to increase individualised, more integrated, and more active, learning
- the development of tutoring and guidance complementing and supporting this type of curriculum

In **Portugal** it will be 1996 before there is full implementation of the Reform of basic and secondary education launched in 1989. Alternative curricula are also being developed freely at the grass-roots, as a result of the emphasis on individualisation; 30 schools in a deprived area, are engaged in an "Intercultural Project", which is proving successful in helping ethnic minority children to integrate better into school

For **Greece**, most of the aims and methods listed in Box 6 were seen in the report as relevant to the improvement of compulsory education (or vocational training); at present, too many parents thought that

school education was without value and advised their children to obtain occupational qualifications outside school

The **UK's** (England and Wales) new National Curriculum, and the recently introduced General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) reflect many of the approaches in Box 6, as do the curriculum changes in Scotland

Box 7 1993 plan to reduce early school leaving by half **the Netherlands**

- Cooperation between schools at regional level encouraged: extra resources available on certain conditions
- Schools have to provide information about post-compulsory early school leavers. A water-tight registration system recording the actions taken about each school leaver is to be set up: a registration point will serve as broker between the early leaver and the training opportunities in the region
- Schools and the regional registration point will have to account for results achieved
- Financial barriers are to be reduced, to speed up the ability of institutions to react to needs
- Grants for development work
- Diversification of training opportunities: training routes must be based on a combination of study in school and work in a firm
- For "very hard to reach" young people, specific actions outside the training system itself will be necessary
- A voucher system is being explored, with credit points to enable young people to plan/obtain their own training

Action Plans and Targets

The **Dutch** government published in 1993 an ambitious Plan to reduce early school leaving in compulsory and post-compulsory The thinking behind it - and the Danish Action Plan (see Box 28) is that results depend on a good mix of different measures. Among them is the setting of targets to be reached by the year 2000

The **Dutch** national action plan provides targets, measures, means and extra resources. With a quantified target to reduce the priority-group ie the "hard-core" of early school leavers from compulsory education without a certificate) by 50% in 6 years, from 12,500 to 6,250. The policy represents a shift from curative action in the margin of the school system to preventive action in the mainstream. Implementation of the measures is still proceeding (see Box 7 and Annex 2)

Targets are being used or planned in other countries too

An **Irish** government Green Paper in 1992 strongly recommended a policy of reducing by 50% the proportion of those dropping out or failing Junior Certificate examinations in a 5-6 year period

The **French** government aims that all pupils shall be attaining at least Level V by 2000

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Reducing repeating

While rigid application of rules on repeating, affecting large numbers of pupils, is clearly demotivating, some repeating may be desirable as part of curriculum flexibility, as in the **French** case above. It may be a way of responding to individual needs

In **Finland** 0.5% of pupils repeat: remedial teaching is an integral part of the compulsory system. In the future, the compulsory school will not have classes organised according to age, so that there will be greater scope for flexibility according to individual needs

As noted above, a catching-up alternative first year in secondary school is taken by 11% of pupils (who repeated in primary school) in **Belgium (Flanders)**. Schools with many immigrant children may organise a variant to meet their specific needs. One of the effects of the extension of compulsory education is expected to be that more young people should be able to finish school with a diploma of secondary education, "though there is still a hard core of young people with only a certificate of primary, or lower secondary, education". 57% of primary schools took part in a scheme in 1993-94, to increase curriculum adaptation to local needs and increase continuity with secondary schools, with very positive results. In **Belgium (Wallonie)** similar measures have been taken, with repeating eliminated in the first two years of the secondary school

In **Luxemburg**, the rules on transfer to post-primary school have been relaxed, so that a pupil's readiness to transfer is assessed on his/her total performance and he/she is not held back by failure in one subject. The result has been a fall in failure rates by 11% since 1989/90

In **Portugal**, in 1991, repeating was abolished at the end of each school year, and only retained at the end of each of the three stages (*cycles*) of compulsory schooling, with a new emphasis on formative assessment, and the provision of Individual Catching-up Plans for pupils needing extra help

Steering by goals and results

In **Sweden**, a new goal-and-results-oriented steering system, with new curricula and syllabuses, will make compulsory schools more responsible for ensuring that more pupils than at present attain full compulsory school standards by eg

- stressing the importance of remedial training if the children do not reach specified standards
- introducing early tests to diagnose problems with reading and mathematics
- obliging the municipalities to provide additional support

Measures such as special and remedial teaching are used more in the early years of compulsory school, and less in the upper secondary school, and have been subject to financial cuts so that they tend to be concentrated on those with severe difficulties, and pupils with less severe ones get reduced support or none

The need to define desired results in a form in which they can be assessed and so to define better the core tasks of the school, can be seen in **Belgium (Flanders)** where the central Office of Educational Development (DVO) is developing proposals for final attainment levels, representing what a majority of pupils should preferably have achieved by the end of a given period

Decentralisation

A decentralised approach is seen in **Flanders** as allowing more control over the curriculum to be devolved to the school. Essential content is defined centrally and the rest is less rigorously controlled, so allowing more scope for school-specific, class-specific or even individualised variations and options to be offered

The 1990 Reform law in **Luxemburg** requires all types of secondary school to set up school-based projects, to develop new activities which will reflect the spirit and philosophy of the Reform:

- developing new educational methods
- organising out-of-school activities, especially those with cultural and sport aspects
- developing action which will assist transition into vocational training, working life and reentry into training, especially those that involve cooperation with a firm or public body, and result in activities which have the promotion of economic awareness as one of their educational aims

A spirit of **"empowerment"** characterises the decentralisation reforms in **Luxemburg**: schools are being given more control over almost all aspects of their functioning from finance to curriculum and staff development

The needs of immigrant pupils

In **Belgium (Flanders)**, reform programmes for immigrant pupils comprise: educational priority, intercultural education, education in one's own language and culture, and reception policy. Home-school interaction is promoted and schools may sign contracts with socio-cultural institutions to develop school- community work. A 2-year project (1993-5) is also aimed at attracting immigrants into technical and artistic secondary education

In **Luxemburg**..."immigrant children will need to be assessed in languages in terms of their success in coping with the enormous challenge they face - learning their mother tongue along with three other languages, and not by their weakness in one or other of them". However some compromises are to be made: special classes in German, and some vocational courses with French as the medium of instruction. But these pupils' mastery of Luxemburgish is so weak at their entry into primary school, after 2 years in kindergarten, that their future success is already compromised at that stage. One study suggests that an extra year of kindergarten for all is the only practicable solution to give them an early mastery of Luxemburgish

In **Austria**, young people of foreign origin often do not receive sufficient support in their mother tongue and lack competence in both it and German, "which makes any communication on abstract matters considerably more difficult". 7.3% of all apprentices in the Dual System in 1992 were of foreign origin, especially in the tourism and craft and trades sectors. A comprehensive framework for a new school instruction model is at present being discussed, going beyond language support, to include assistance for their integration and life outside school, and provide ongoing help for their integration into the job market. Since 1992, common remedial measures for children with German as their second language have been adopted as part of the regular school system. These include

- catch-up courses in German
- smaller classes
- assistance by teachers of the child's mother tongue included in or parallel to regular instruction
- lessons held in the mother tongue as an optional practical course (in a total of 9 languages)

Avoiding de-motivation

Attempts to avoid stigmatising those who do leave early, so as to help and encourage them to re-enter education and training later, are a feature of the Nordic countries' reforms, and are facilitated by modular systems of learning and assessment

"Demotivation is a relatively mild problem in **Finland** because of the principle of equality which has been the leading principle in our educational policy for about 30 years"

In **Norway** all pupils are legally entitled to a leaving certificate by the end of their final compulsory school year. Issued certificates may be incomplete. Incomplete certificates means that the grade in certain subjects are left out, or that the grades from the 7th or 8th year are entered in the certificate, instead of final grades from the 9th grade

Incomplete certificates are issued at the request of the parents or guardians of the child. Parents may, on behalf of their child, apply to be exempted from receiving grades in certain subjects. Applications may be filed in cases of dyslexia or other learning difficulties, or by immigrant pupils, whose period of stay in Norway has been too short to enable them to obtain a passing grade. Rather than failing the exam, they may prefer to be exempted

Pupils with high rates of absence are entitled to have previous internal assessments from the 7th or 8th grade entered in their certificates

In all cases the school leaver receives an incomplete certificate. The proportion of pupils exempted from receiving grades is very low: in 1993, in most subjects less than 1%. Pupils receiving incomplete certificates are still allowed entry to upper secondary schooling

2 CURRICULUM VARIATION

2a MORE-VOCATIONAL CURRICULA

More-vocational courses for lower attainers

The scope for allowing young people in difficulty with the regular curriculum to divert early ie before the end of compulsory school, to more practical or "vocational" courses specially designed for them, is a well-tried path in some countries and has not been abandoned yet. It presents the difficulty that "vocational" education and training is likely to be perceived as a result as stigmatised - the curriculum for those who have been "relegated". Some new initiatives have attempted to avoid this by ensuring it is not a dead-end but leads to a qualification and/or to further studies. But the question remains whether such arrangements on their own are really a suitable or effective response to the needs of the young people for whom they are intended

In **France** there have been several attempts to provide better and more suitable alternative courses (or *classes*) for those not succeeding in the regular curriculum at the end of their first two years in the 11-16 secondary school (*collège*)

The use of remedial streams (CPPN, CPA) has been discouraged and reduced. They have been replaced by the ***4ième and 3ième technologiques*** (third- and fourth-year technical courses) covering the last two years of compulsory schooling. It was hoped this would help develop and revitalise initial vocational training at this level. In practice these courses have mostly been set up in the (mainly post-compulsory) vocational schools (*lycées professionnels*) and have received at least some of those who have failed in the second and third years of the *collège*

As a result, most recently (in 1991), the Ministry of Education launched an experiment in some *Académies* - the **4ième d'aide et de soutien et la 3ième d'insertion** - a new two-year qualifying course terminating in a CAP (the lowest-level vocational qualification), designed to cope with the total situation of the young person and provide a valid qualification as an incentive at the end of the course: see Box 8

Meanwhile, the recent Law on training provides for the relaunch of pre-vocational classes using work experience, for young people from age 14 who are "in severe difficulties". This is very controversial since the evaluations of similar classes in the 1980s showed poor evidence of their effectiveness either to help the young people to catch up or to help them enter an apprenticeship which is traditionally the form of training for those that have failed in school

Box 8 *La 4ième d'aide et de soutien et la 3ième d'insertion* **France**

The purpose here is to provide

- a course which leads to a usable vocational qualification (usually a *Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnel* or CAP- the lowest vocational qualification) in 2 years
- support to deal with the personal and social problems surrounding young people in sever difficulty

The *collège* is expected to provide the young person with help not only on his/her studies but also to deal with the outside world

The initiative means the winding up of two third-year streams - the CCPN and the CPA - which were stigmatised as "relegation" classes, and the development of a "New CAP" in consultation with industry.

Research seems to indicate that success varies depending on

- how well the *collège* implements the initiative, and how far it is constrained in doing so
- how well the *collège* can intervene in support of the social and economic life of the student

and that

- contract-based teaching and individualised curricula do not guarantee success on their own
- the teaching approach is a severe test of the organisational and resource limits of the school system

Pupils in the 10th year in schools in **Northrhine-Westfalia** can in exceptional cases attend class in a non-school institution ie in workshops, where they can receive a one-year remedial vocational course, involving 20 practical hours in 6 different fields. Sometimes they may be lodged in a boarding school, "where it seems desirable to offer a new start, under better conditions, away from their unfavourable domestic environment"

With the dismantling of "*enseignement complémentaire*" in **Luxemburg** as from 1994/95, those pupils who would previously have entered it will now enter secondary technical education, but into a special "preparatory" section of it, where they will have the possibility of advancing normally into secondary technical education proper, if they can manage it; or of continuing separately in classes preparing them for the basic vocational qualification (CITP) or of leaving school at the end of compulsory education. In other words, a form of adapted education with possibilities of integration

The content and methods of their curriculum will closely resemble that envisaged in the general reforms summarised above in Box 6: in addition there will be

- individual assessments and educational plans
- learner-centred teaching, using modules (*unités capitalisables*)
- courses of flexible duration, but transfer onwards in any case after year 9
- tutoring, guidance support and follow-up

"Pick 'n' Mix"

The introduction of new more-vocationally-relevant courses, allowing for more choice, as part of mainstream compulsory education and hopefully with "parity of esteem" with the existing more-theoretical GCSE courses, is a feature of current developments in the **UK** (England and Wales). Such a system of choice is already in operation in Scotland (see Box 9 - Menus and modules):

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As well as introducing, in the National Curriculum (for England and Wales) in 1988, a series of initiatives to strengthen the technical-vocational elements of compulsory school, the **UK** (England and Wales) is developing plans to assist "those young people who are least well-served by the current arrangements, give limited commitment, and make poor progress" in compulsory school. An important aim is to facilitate progression to vocational courses at the age of 16 by

- reducing the time devoted by all pupils to the compulsory subjects (English, mathematics and science, and also a modern foreign language, technology, physical education, religious education, and sex education), to allow up to 40% of curriculum time for other studies and thereby giving greater choice in the 4th and 5th years of secondary school
- introducing more opportunities for pre-vocational options at that stage

The intention is then to develop a **vocational pathway** as an alternative to the regular "academic" courses within compulsory education, by offering a new "general diploma" on a modular basis in 14 broad vocational areas as a vocational equivalent to GCSE at age 16, made up of a mixture of GCSE courses and vocational equivalents (GNVQs)

The new pathway is aimed at 25% of the cohort: it is seen as for the benefit of those who make slow progress in the present system, but nonetheless "it is expected it will help to achieve parity between the academic and the vocational route". Trials are to start in 1995. The equivalent Scottish system is referred to in Box 9

Box 9 Menus and modules **UK (Scotland)**

In Scotland, pupils choose in their last 2 years of compulsory school from a menu which includes

- Highers (more theoretical courses)
- National Certificate modules (vocational training elements based on consultation with end-users in industry and education)
- Skillstart courses (basic skills for slower learners)

Over 100,000 secondary school pupils study each year for almost 250,000 National Certificate modules produced in the Scottish Vocational Education Council (SCOTVEC) system of modules for vocational training, established as long ago as 1985

Pupils appear to appreciate the structure and assessment styles of the modules, which are available in academic subjects as well as vocational ones

The new GNVQ system (General National Vocational Qualifications and the Scottish National Vocational Qualifications in Scotland) also has a part to play here, in accommodating "the lower attainers". Although primarily aimed at the post-compulsory age, ie over 16, Foundation level of GNVQ (the lowest of the three levels of the award) is equivalent to the lower levels of GCSE, and is seen as a possible alternative to GCSE for some, though "many of the lower attainers ... may not be ready for GCSE atall"

"Young people cannot be catered for by any one route": other, regional, assessment units and graded assessment schemes are available which "might fit into the GNVQ route", covering core skills and others, and no firm plan has yet been drawn up. The fundamental concern is that there should always be possibilities for progression. The scope for using NVQs (the new vocational qualifications) in schools is thought to be limited "because of the practical workplace experience required, both for pupils and teachers" though the possibility of using them in post-compulsory schools has not been ruled out

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More gradual transition

Emphasis is put in the reform in the **Netherlands** which came into force in 1993 on making the transition from general education to vocational training more gradual, only starting at a later age than at present since, under existing arrangements, pupils or their parents have to choose, or accept a choice made for them, when the child is aged 12:

> These innovations in the **Netherlands** concentrate on the idea of "smoothing" the transition process:
>
> - the introduction of a common core curriculum (*basisvorming* - introduced in 1993) from age 12 to 15, to delay the moment of choice of career to the end of compulsory education. Pupils from age 12 will still be in vocationally-labelled schools (vbo, mavo, havo, vwo) and there is another proposal for those in the pre-vocational and junior general secondary tracks (vbo and havo) to be streamed, not according to level as is the case now, but according to destination ie whether they are seen as going on to senior secondary general education (mbo), apprenticeship or into a job. In other words, the strategy is to "stream" or "profile" curricula in the last stage of compulsory education so as to create a gradual or "smoothed" transition into further training or the labour market
>
> - teaching each of the compulsory subjects at two levels, and allowing 20% of the curriculum for optional subjects according to school-specific goals: eg preparing students for the next stage of learning, religious education, tutorials, vocational guidance, or pre-vocational subjects
>
> - tests at the end of the core curriculum stage

Another curriculum innovation is that of "bridge-building" which is being tried out in **Denmark** where there are experiments with curricula in the last stage of compulsory school which integrate guidance and education, and allow the young person to choose which course to go on to in the upper secondary school on the basis of some experience in *Folkeskole*. "Taster", and "bridge", courses have in the past been tried in the **UK** also.

2b "ADAPTED" AND "ALTERNATIVE"

The **UK** "pick 'n' mix" curriculum will give 40% of time to optional subjects; the **Dutch** *basisvorming* curriculum 20%. In **Norway**, the basic principle is that all pupils shall follow the common curriculum, but schools and teachers must adapt it to suit the pupil. There are very limited options in the last 2 years.

"Adapted education"

In **Norway**, compulsory education has been developed, from as long ago as 1975, using the concept of a right to "adapted education". The school must also care for the whole person, not just be responsible for the transmission of knowledge ("extended education" - see further below):

> **Norwegian** compulsory education provision is based on a policy of a right to "adapted education" ie that teaching must be adapted to the needs, abilities and background of the individual pupil. It requires that teachers use their professional judgement in choosing methods that will meet the needs of the individual pupil
>
> The legal framework differentiates a right to *adapted education* from the right to *special education* which only applies to those who can provide specialist testimony on their need for special education provision. Schools are provided with extra resources, additional to mainstream funding, to make special arrangements

for pupils who need extra attention, whether through smaller remedial groups or an additional teacher in the class with a pupil or pupils with learning difficulties

Any adjustments to the school programme to cater for these pupils' needs must be limited to adaptations of teaching methods and organisation of the learning environment; all pupils are required to cover the same curriculum to the end of grade 7 (age 13) and options exist then on only a very limited scale ie a second foreign language or other interest-based subjects such as work practice, photography, or other locally developed options

Additional help is provided for pupils with different kinds of learning difficulties:

In **Sweden**, for example

- extra time for basic skills training may be taken to ensure the normal level is reached, at the expense of other subjects
- remedial teaching may be added/substituted for a limited time
- mother tongue instruction in/through the mother tongue can be given, for pupils with a native language other than Swedish
- Swedish as a second language must be taught, as required, to these pupils in compulsory school, and to immigrant children who have Swedish as their main home language, and to those who have Swedish as home language but have been admitted from schools abroad
- special tuition must be arranged for pupils with impaired hearing/vision and physical disabilities
- adjusted study programmes can be arranged, where the school cannot provide suitably, with parts of the education at a workplace outside the school

Box 10 Individualising a common curriculum **Finland**

The national distribution of lesson hours in the compulsory school does not specify the classes when various subjects are to be introduced. Nor does it set upper limits to the number of hours subjects must be given, - though it sets the minimum hours

The distribution of lesson hours for various students can therefore differ between different schools and even within the same school. The flexibility of the distribution of lesson hours gives us the chance to develop teaching in accordance with the special characteristics of the school in question

The curriculum must be drafted so that the student is able to continue with his/her studies at the next schooling level although he/she has had only the minimum number of hours defined in the national distribution of class hours

In **Finland**, the municipality and the school itself have very wide authority to decide on programmes, even individually. In practice, economic reasons restrict the possibility for individualisation

Portugal has recently introduced Supplementary Teaching Support, equal to an extra 7% of teacher-hours, for pupils who have severe difficulty in passing their leaving school certificate

Alternative schools

The measures so far described are designed to allow greater flexibility in the school's response to individual interest and need, and so to sustain or reawaken motivation and commitment to learning. For some pupils they are seen to be insufficient. Alternative solutions, outside the

compulsory school, are felt to be needed in some countries. For how many pupils? Answers vary, but there are signs of an upward trend:

> The 100 **Danish** Continuation Schools are seen as one of the factors contributing to the very high completion rate in compulsory education. They are offering, in this case in a different institution, "alternative" provision to that of the regular compulsory school. They provide for a small minority of pupils, currently 10%, but seen as likely to increase

> **Finland** has some alternative schools, but very few - 7 in 1992

> *Youth Encounter* was an **Irish** version of alternative provision, consisting of a series of (Education Department) local projects launched in the late 1970s; its 4 city-based literacy and numeracy projects were for young people aged 10-16 who had not been able to cope with school

"Extended education"

It is clear that the idea of alternative provision for a minority of "difficult" pupils goes against the general trend of the past decade towards maximum integration of all the pupils hitherto educated in Special schools of different kinds. However, the possibility has to be recognised that, for the benefit both of the regular compulsory school and the individual pupil whose behaviour is exceptionally disturbed or disturbing, some pupils may have to be withdrawn from regular classes. In the case of **Norway**, as we can see below, we are talking about a tiny percentage of pupils (0.7% at present); in **Denmark**, about 10% are in the Continuation Schools, but the number is thought likely to rise:

> Pupils with social and emotional problems were explicitly mentioned in a **Norwegian** 1989 White Paper on Special Education which laid the basis for the integration of children with special needs into their local schools. This category was described as a group on the increase: behavioral problems have become a part of everyday life in the classroom. This group poses a challenge for the teacher, but are not always diagnosed or seen as instances of "special needs" in a strict sense. Sometimes social or emotional problems may even be caused or increased by the school itself, when it is not able to create a good environment for the pupil. Hence the need for adapted education. In dealing with these pupils the principle of "adapted education" and special education merge, as the group is hard to demarcate. Increased qualifications among local teachers is dealing with behavioral problems was seen as an important aspect of the new policy for integrated education

> The **Norwegian** White Paper said the school should practise "an extended concept of education, which implies both the transmission of knowledge and care for the whole person". Development of new alternative provision that integrated education, leisure time activities and local community work was recommended, and cooperation with Child Protection authorities was suggested for their development

"Alternative school units"

In-school and external "alternative school units" have been developed in **Norway.** Alternative provision has grown as a grass roots movement, sustained by teachers, guidance personnel and local education officials who have seen the need for special provision for pupils who are not able to develop their potential in the programme provided by their home school. From 1987 to 1991 the number of "alternative provisions" increased by 100%, from 25 alternative establishments to 50: and more external units were being planned.

Box 11 "Alternative School Units" **Norway**

The first Alternative Units were established in the mid-1970s. In recent years, the number of units has shown a rapid increase, especially in urban and other densely populated areas, to accommodate pupils who do not seem to benefit from special internal provision. Some municipalities have established several

A typical unit has 8-10 pupils. 70% are boys. There are 3 teachers, ⅓rds of them male. Most employ an additional part-time assistant, financed by the Child Protection Authorities. Most pupils lived at home **Enrolment is based on voluntary transfer** from mainstream provision, on application by pupils and parents. The alternative unit is for educational provision, not a place for observation or therapeutic treatment

Pupils who enrol

- are those that the home school has not been able to help effectively
- often have behavioral and relational problems: in a recent study, 80% had received counselling, 20% had been in contact with the child psychiatric service, 14% had been enrolled in special institutions/schools; 40% had suffered psychological and physical neglect (compared to 1.3% of the general population); and 9% had been placed with foster parents

They were not necessarily truants or drop-outs

"Some of the pupils were resourceful, and did not cause disturbances in the ordinary school by breaking rules, but they had become social isolates and were attracted to destructive peer groups with drug problems and criminal tendencies. The recruits to the schools have common problems in that their grades are below their potential and they have learning difficulties. Their present situation seems to hinder positive development and they show general lack of school motivation. In terms of personal functioning they constitute a heterogeneous group. Their needs ... indicate an area where the responsibility of Child Protection Authorities and the school system overlap"

The "adapted teaching" provided is

- often aimed at developing social skills for future work adjustment, and adult family life; basic skills in reading, writing, and maths in order to obtain a complete compulsory school certificate; and prevention of drug abusive and criminal careers
- is aimed at establishing relations of trust with the pupils by showing concern for the young people and an active interest in aspects of youth culture, while at the same time being explicit on the distinction between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour
- is aimed at promoting the self-esteem and self-confidence of the young people with learning events organised to enable them to experience mastery
- is based on normal grading but with frequent feed-back eg at least twice-yearly reports to parents on the pupil's work, social abilities, and positive results and events
- includes leisure-time activities eg evening courses on car repairs, bowling, dancing, doing make-up, diving, sailing, boating, cooking, etc. Outside activities, social evenings, expeditions for skiing etc are included

The units surveyed in the study tried to create a network tying the school unit to many external partners: eg meetings with parents were organised several times a year and 75% of units made home visits

A National forum was set up by members of staff in alternative provisions in 1985, and by 1994 the Forum had 56 member schools, arranging an annual meeting and seminar. "The movement seems to be gathering momentum."

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The decentralisation of individual provision and the merging of special education with the general concept of "adapted education" implies that the ordinary school must be able to provide a wide variety of pedagogical measures to accommodate children with various needs. *"Alternative school units"* were suggested by the Ministry of Education as a suitable local solution for pupils with behavioral and relational problems, and reinforced measures within the individual class

Since 1989 a variety of alternative provision has been developed, and a study in 1991 showed three main models

- ***internal provision*** in the school ie special tutoring, remedial reaching for small groups, or projects organised for target groups

- ***external provision*** ie a separate school unit located at a distance form the home school pupil, but still within the community of the pupil

- ***combined provision*** consisting of work practice for some days of the week and school attendance for the rest

They all have the common aim of providing a more flexible and child-centred situation of learning for children with behavioral problems, promoting development of social skills as well as progress in school subjects

It is important to note however the scale of alternative provision: 0.7% of all pupils in lower secondary school in 1991. Studies on mental health in **Norway** have indicated that the proportion of young people with mental health problems is about 20%. There seems to be an increase in pupils suffering from social and relational problems: 20-30% of those registered at guidance clinics suffer from them. This may indicate that existing alternative provision in lower secondary school represents a serious undersupply. It is so far impossible to establish what distinguishes the small group who receive external alternative provision from the ones with similar problems

The characteristics of the smaller alternative school units are set out in Box 11 above. Two much larger ones, enrolling over 200 pupils exist in Oslo and Trondheim. The large Oslo school unit is described in Annex 4, together with a support centre for internal alternative provision - the Ramsvik Resource.

The **Norwegian** report comments that

"Alternative provision" may seem to contradict the official policy for the compulsory school. There is a tension between the principle of adapted education provision for all, including the integration of pupils with special educational needs in the normal school, and the development of external alternative school units. However, alternative provision may be seen as just another way of adapting the educational programme to the child. The principle of integration and inclusion is upheld in the sense that pupils in external alternative school units are still registered as pupils in their home school. They go through the same curriculum as the rest of the year group, they sit for final exams in their home school, and their compulsory school certificate is issued by their home school. Temporary segregation may be seen as a means to future integration and inclusion

3 GUIDANCE AND VOCATIONAL ORIENTATION

3a VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE THROUGH THE CURRICULUM

The importance of the school's role in developing the young person's ability to think about, and eventually choose, a career pathway has been accentuated by several factors. Among them are

- the need for the schools to be able to prepare **all** pupils for entry to working life, not just those entering it immediately after school; this change is due to many things, but especially the much greater diversity of employment and employment patterns (the "Portfolio Career") which young people now face after finishing school, at whatever age they leave

- gradual recognition on the part of the schools that the acquisition of subject knowledge alone is insufficient to develop in pupils the skills they need for success in entering working life. Some very important general skills or qualities have also to be developed: understanding and being able to project oneself, the ability to think about and plan one's next employment, the ability to relate oneself to the potential roles, risks and rewards of a particular job, and the ability to make up one's own mind and stick to it

Box 12 The purpose of guidance **Finland**

"Student counselling is one of the tasks of the compulsory school

The purpose of student counselling is to support, help and direct the students in such a manner that every student gets through his/her studies in the comprehensive school as well as possible and is able to make appropriate and suitable decisions concerning his/her schooling and career"

- the perception that it is unrealistic to expect the young person to be able to make judgments about choice of career path in a meaningful way at the of age 12, 13 or 14; indeed that even at age 16, many young people are still not ready to make it, but can profit from having to address their minds to it. Therefore curriculum and school structures should be adapted so as to avoid very early choices ie between 12 and 15/16

- realisation that the process of choice of career pathway, or forming a *projet de vie*, has to be founded on two things: some knowledge of the required qualifications of particular vocations (or "careers education") and some, rather more intuitive, understanding of the nature of the working world, partly obtainable from a period of "work experience" ie direct contact with the workplace at a quite early stage, around age 14-15

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- understanding that the curriculum, - in its broadest sense and including out-of-school as well as in-school activities and experience - can contribute in a variety of ways: by providing the information required, by developing these personal skills, and by fostering a sense of personal identity and self-confidence.

Structural change

Member States are often tackling these new requirements on a broad front:

In the **Netherlands**

- at the lower end of the school, the new common core curriculum for age 11 to 14, introduced gradually from 1993, postpones the moment at which a career choice has to be made from 12 to 14; one reason for doing this is to make it more likely that girls will choose eg mathematics, having by then a better appreciation of the consequences of not doing so

- an obligation has been laid on schools to provide careers advice to their students, and a new law allows schools to organise work experience placements for students in their penultimate year, when most of them are age 14

- the law also allows vbo (vocational) schools which provide pre-vocational courses to organise placements for them in their last compulsory year. No maximum hours are set for the 15 year-olds. Initiatives to extend this to general education schools have been announced

- in the post-compulsory stage, proposals have been made to introduce a "profile" system, grouping subjects into four broad vocational areas or "profiles" in the upper secondary school: science and technology; science and health; economics and society; and culture and society

In **Belgium (Flanders)** engineering and technology are being introduced in the first year of secondary school, and guidance centres encouraged to become more familiar with the world of the technical schools, in order to help steer pupils better towards the type of education which best suits them

In **Spain** the LOGSE (Law on the Reform) lays down that Tutoring and Guidance are to be part of the teaching, or curriculum, at every stage of compulsory schooling. To prevent teachers from being overwhelmed by their responsibilities, specialist staff are to be available to support them. Each school (Centre) will have to set up a Guidance Department, which will be responsible for developing a plan for guidance in the school as well as playing a full part in the curriculum work of the school. Guidance will thus be a part of the teaching/learning process, not a narrow function concerned only with selecting pupils for the next stage of education

"Arbeitslehre"[13]

In **Germany**, "Preparation for the world of work" can be found as a separate subject in the curriculum, or an element in several subjects. Its essential characteristic is that it enables the young person to examine and learn about society as he or she is going shortly to encounter it, as a young adult

Nearly all pupils in compulsory school in **Germany**, and certainly all those in non-grammar schools, receive vocational orientation to prepare them for choosing a vocation. The schools undertake this task in "*Arbeitslehre*" in cooperation with firms offering training as well as with job counsellors from the local labour offices. The "subject" is long-established, having been started in the 1950s; it is generally closely

[13] ie Preparation for the world of work. The title and form differ from *Land* to *Land*

integrated into the rest of the school curriculum; and varies in form and content according to local conditions. The main components are summarised in Box 13

Box 13 The wide scope of "*Arbeitslehre*" Germany

- on-the-job practical/work experience in a firm or social institution
- plant visits/field trips
- discussions with business representatives in school, eg on topics such as women in traditionally male-dominated occupations
- on-the-job practical/work experience for teachers
- visits to Career Information Centres of the Labour Administration
- job-orientation events at schools on eg what is vocational choice? how do I proceed? how can I determine what my abilities and interests are?
- thematically specific job-orientation events for classes or groups (eg on job-application procedures)
- regular consultation hours in schools
- parent meetings in the Career Information Centres or in schools
- information afternoons (lectures on the demand for particular occupations, in cooperation with representatives of the employers)
- local or regional "job fairs" (exhibitions and afternoon events in cooperation with local industry)
- group counselling (eg information on acceptance requirements for particular vocations)
- individual counselling by labour guidance counsellors (with leave from school)

In the **Netherlands**, use has been made of the German experience with *Arbeitslehre*, and with the **UK**'s in Craft, Design and Technology, in the development and introduction of "Technology" as a new subject in the new 11-14 compulsory school curriculum - see Box 36 on Parity of Esteem between general and vocational education and training. It is hoped it will improve the image of technical training and have a positive influence on attitudes towards vocational education and training in general and the technology area in particular

"Technology" is also incorporated in the **Greek** secondary curriculum

Pre-vocational education (or Basic Vocational Education) is also included under the **Spanish** LOGSE reform of compulsory education, in the form of technology courses which are compulsory for all

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Links with industry

The generation of links between schools and firms has grown enormously in the past decade, becoming almost universal at the level of compulsory schools in some countries. Some countries have had elaborate, highly-structured arrangements for many years (cf Box 13 on *Arbeitslehre* above):

> The need to give guidance high visibility in national policy and to take seriously the problems of ensuring good coordination between the many actors taking part in its provision is reflected in **Denmark** in the existence of the National Council for Educational and Vocational Guidance (RUE) which includes the social partners, the Ministries of Education and Labour, and representatives of the counties and municipalities. Similar coordinating bodies exist at county and municipal level
>
> In most local areas in **Denmark**, the labour market organisations have established "guest-teacher" services (ie visiting speakers from firms) which the local schools can make use of according to their own needs

Others have recently made substantial progress:

> In **France**, 87% of *collèges* and 99% of *lycées professionnels* are linked with firms. Over half the activities resulting are with small firms (less than 10 employees). The main aims are to give pupils a favourable view of firms; to help to ensure that all pupils, especially those "in difficulty" get a vocational training before they leave the school system; to help motivate them; and to widen their possible career choices. Firms have even developed links with Apprenticeship Training Centres (CFA) and the apprenticeship training sections of *lycées professionnels* for these purposes
>
> A series of agreements have been signed in **Italy** in the last few years between the government and the social partners: strengthening school-industry links is one of their main aims
>
> In the **UK** school-industry links are now very common and attention has turned to questions of quality and their impact on improving the value of training:
>
> ▪ ***quality objectives*** for school-business links have been set by the government
>
> - a week's work experience for all pupils in their last year of compulsory education, and another later for those who stay on
>
> - 10% of all primary and secondary teachers, especially headteachers, to have a business placement each year, and all schools to receive a business placement each year
>
> - all employers of over 200 people encouraged to release at least one employee each year for a weeks' placement in a school
>
> - employers to endorse pupil's achievements on work experience in their National Record of Achievement and use the Records in their recruitment procedures
>
> ▪ area-based ***Compacts***, and ***Education-Business Partnerships***[14], have been introduced and supported to strengthen school-firm cooperation; **Compacts** (area-based agreements between firms and schools) were originally in 62 Inner City areas with a high proportion of "relatively disadvantaged young people whose aspirations and qualifications tended to lag behind the national average", but were later extended nationwide
>
> **Austria** offers "Vocational guidance and educational information" to pupils in Years 7 and 8 (introduced in 1989) and a 3-day work experience in firms in Year 9. "Vocational guidance is supported by "real contacts" between school and firms eg company visits, study tours, school projects, and company expert advisers coming into the school as well as pilot apprenticeship training (*Schnupperlehre*), which can provide "tasting"

[14] see chapter 7

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Box 14 "Mini-companies" **Belgium**

About 250 "mini-companies" can be found in **Belgium**. Run by young people, usually in their last year of secondary school, after school hours, they are coordinated by *Yonge ondememingen* (Young Companies), a non-profit body, with a board of directors drawn from teachers, and the business world especially young businessmen

"Mini-companies" allow young people to try out business life by simulating a company - an idea which has found its way to Europe from the USA, and is in active use in the **UK** and **Ireland**

"Young people see the idea as overwhelmingly positive: they learn how to work in a group, they learn other skills which are not usually brought out in school; their motivation is increased, and it is an exciting formula"

experiences in a number of vocations. Non-university-oriented pupils get more of this experience, but all pupils now get some: one week of work experience is part of the pre-vocational (9th) year, (3 days in the main and general secondary schools and 6 days for those in special schools.) According to a recent study, they are decisive in helping teenagers choose their career

Promoting technical-vocational education and careers

A common feature of the recent compulsory school reforms in many countries has been the introduction of "technology" as a new subject, with an implicit guidance objective (**Belgium**, the **Netherlands**, **Spain**, the **UK**). The thinking here is that a more balanced curriculum should help lead pupils to make better balanced career choices - at all levels

The **UK** has taken special steps in recent years to raise the profile of technical and vocational learning in the general curriculum:

- the ***Technical and Vocational Education Initiative***: introduced in 1983 and extended gradually to all areas. Evaluations have shown, among other things, some definite help for lower ability pupils in their transition to work and improved personal and inter-personal skills among pupils in schools taking part

- the introduction of work experience and ***"the work-related curriculum"***: the government recently asked TECs and their partners to ensure "that all pupils in their last year of compulsory education can have at least one week's work experience" and offered funding to support it. Because of the diversity of providers and types, it is difficult to monitor the extent and quality of provision; primary schools are also involved

Since 1982, **Denmark** has put special emphasis on transition issues for pupils who want to enter commercial and technical education and training: resources have been earmarked for special introductory courses for pupils in their 8th and 9th year, lasting 2-5 days, to give them direct and specific possibility of testing themselves in the curriculum of initial vocational education and training. The courses are run by the teachers and guidance personnel of the commercial and technical schools

To strengthen the technical-vocational part of the **Irish** school system, employers drew attention to the fact that schools had become gradually more academic in nature in recent years, and recommended selection into a separate high quality technical and vocational stream after primary school. But the latest government Green Paper (1992) rejects this in favour of establishing broader training, based on a modular system, without going back to selection at an early age, and taking advantage of the efforts in recent years to reduce the differences between general and vocational schools. At present the plan is to go on increasing uptake of the Vocational Leaving Certificate (LCVP), but participation is, by necessity, limited to those in schools which can provide technical subjects

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A post-compulsory experimental Senior Certificate, for new courses placing equal emphasis on the development of practical skills and skills associated with traditional education has been in use in Ireland since 1986

Although apprenticeship in **France** is primarily and historically the training for those who have failed in school, recent changes have included widening its entry and making it possible to take a range of qualifications including a Vocational Baccalaureate this way, with a view to attracting higher standard entrants, so bringing it much closer to the German system. Part of the plan is to raise the whole status of apprenticeship and so make it more effective because more attractive at all levels. Some large firms have opened high-level apprenticeship training sections and more Vocational Baccalaureates can be taken by the apprenticeship route. How far recruitment into these will advance given the unfavourable image of apprenticeship hitherto, and how far firms will go in investing in facilities, even with some government help, remains to be seen

In **Luxemburg**, the ORIKA (Guidance for pupils) Project was introduced in 1989 to combat, and replace, the old system of selective transfer from primary to post-primary at age 12. Its aims are set out in Box 15

One of the ways of implementing these aims will be through workshops held in technical schools during normal school hours, on aspects of science and technology. Publicity campaigns are also being mounted to promote technical schools ("*Le technique, l'autre lycée*"; and "*Le technique, ta clé pour l'avenir*")

Box 15 Aims of the ORIKA guidance development project **Luxemburg**

- interest children in scientific and technical subjects
- improve equality of opportunity by informing both boys and girls about modern technology
- assess children's manual abilities
- tell children about the various technical and craft courses offered in secondary technical education
- increase continuity between primary and secondary education
- reduce the stress caused by change of stage and school at the point of transfer from primary school

Financial incentives

The Association of **Dutch** Enterprises is not convinced that information and "soft" persuasion will really cause enough students to opt for technical courses during their lower secondary schooling

They therefore propose a range of other incentives such as
- differentiated college fees (lower fees where labour market prospects are good)
- higher grants for students choosing technical courses
- longer grants

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and some other measures too

- *numerus clausus* for over-popular courses
- better information campaigns about the labour market situation
- promotion campaigns for technical and science courses
- a requirement on tertiary-level institutes to monitor the employment careers of their graduates

"Bridge-building"

A new and promising development in **Denmark** is "**bridge-building**" ie constructing a bridging year course between the end of compulsory school and the start of the next stage, in this case technical education and training

Since 1991, 10 municipalities in **Denmark** have been trying a new 10th year (the 10th year is optional ie after the end of compulsory education), designed to integrate the first year of initial technical education and training with a standard 10th year curriculum; the pupils have 2 days a week in technical training and the other 3 days in ordinary lessons in the *Folkeskole*. The evidence is encouraging: drop-out has been very low, and pupils, teachers, guidance staff, and school managers have expressed a high level of satisfaction with the programmes. Some similar experiments in commercial education and training, and social and health care education and training have been carried out too

Short one-year vocational courses leading to a vocational qualification have been being developed in Vocational Training Centres in **Portugal** since 1989, to help young people's transition from compulsory education to employment

3b BETTER GUIDANCE SERVICES

As we saw earlier, one of the difficulties in providing good guidance in the school is the limited experience of the outside economic world of the teachers providing it.

For this reason, some countries especially **Germany** rely heavily on advisers outside the schools for providing careers information and advice, leaving to the school only the general task of the pupil's introduction to the world of work (*arbeitslehre* - see above).

In **Austria**, as a result of 1985 amendments to the curriculum, and a 1989 "Master plan for the improvement of Vocational Guidance", occupational guidance services using careers counsellors now exist in all secondary (level I and II) schools, to advise pupils on their educational options. From March 1994, it has been agreed that all pupils will be obliged to attend careers guidance and counselling courses at intermediate level, whereas up to now only some pupils were receiving it. "Self-service" careers information centres (BIZ) exist in all provinces, where teachers, parents and pupils can get advice and information

Specific targeted counselling services eg those provided by the Vienna Employment Institute and the Careers Advancement Institute (BFI) catered in 1993 for 20,000 young people in various at-risk categories. Annual Guidance Fairs are also held in Vienna and elsewhere

Austria thus joins the countries where the provision of guidance is obligatory. Another one to have done so recently is the **Netherlands**

The new law on secondary education in the **Netherlands** states that schools must indicate in their "workplan" "the ways and means used to advise students at the end of each school year, in particular at the end of the 2nd year, on the best way for them to continue with their education/training". Students' own careers ideas must be taken into account. At present the obligation applies to compulsory schools only but it is planned to extend it up to the end of (upper) secondary school soon

Other forms of organisation of guidance provision include shared responsibility between class teachers and guidance counsellors/careers advisers. The former deals with the development of the skills and qualities needed to make career choices well; and the specialist counsellor, based outside the school and generally serving several, is expected to assist that process, and especially liaise with local firms on the organisation and supply of work placements, and to keep the school informed about changes in the local and national labour market. Such arrangements are difficult to get right: contracting for the outside advice is the latest way to be tried, in the Netherlands and the UK:

A survey of guidance in the **UK** in 1991 showed a wide variation in quality, with around one third of schools having formal procedures and one quarter with unsatisfactory systems

As a result, in England and Wales,

- responsibility for the Careers Service, formerly provided by local education authorities, has been taken over by the Employment Department, until new Careers Service Partnerships can be set up, by contract after competitive tender in each area
- closer links between careers education and careers guidance are being encouraged. Careers education will continue to be provided by teachers, but the new Careers Service will deliver careers guidance in schools in collaboration with them. In this way it is expected that better value for money will be achieved. Pilot experiments took place in 1993/93 in 13 areas; the change to the new system will be complete by 1996
- the Employment Department is addressing the problems of uneven quality by undertaking baseline studies of Careers Service work and developing national standards and indicators for it

Portugal set up a national guidance service (SPO) in 1993: 270 service centres were set up, covering 430 schools: the service is area-based, each one serving several schools, with priority for those in the first years of secondary school and their last year of compulsory education

This has been supplemented by a new effort to spread information about opportunities in vocational training, under a decree of 1992. Centres to assist young people's entry into working life (UNIVAS) and Employment Clubs have also been set up in 1992-3

The importance of involving all the teaching staff if guidance is to be properly integrated into the curriculum underlies the new strategy adopted in **Luxemburg**:

In the belief that if pupils were better informed, and working on courses suited to them, and given some help over their personal difficulties, they would succeed better in secondary school, guidance staff were introduced into schools in the 1960s and 70s (SPOS). It is now clear that it is necessary to involve all the teaching staff in this effort, and make the process a continuous one during all a child's time in secondary school

The following are some of the measures taken in the schools to achieve it:

- establishing welcome arrangements for pupils on their entry to the 7th year (first year of secondary) and trying to understand, on a year-by-year basis, how pupils adapt to the school system and what help they have to do so
- providing systematic guidance at key stages in the pupil's progress through the school
- opening the school up to the outside world through visits, courses, information meetings etc
- launching a project to integrate guidance into the school curriculum of pupils aged 12 to 15, ie in the first cycle of post-primary education

These steps are being complemented by a relaxation of the technical school's rules on transfer at the end of the 9th year (age 15), and the use of a fuller and more descriptive pupil-profile, designed to steer the pupil positively towards one of the subsequent types of upper secondary education: vocational, technician training, or technical education. The pupil, and the parents, will be more active engaged

A BIZ (self-service information centre) has also been set up modelled on the German BIZ system, to improve awareness of all types of occupations and related training. It works in close collaboration with the ALJ (local Youth Information Centre). However, since most of the information is in German, and about opportunities outside Luxemburg, a good deal remains to be done before it is really useful to most immigrant pupils

Work experience may be under a separate "service": **Sweden** has two programmes for cooperation between compulsory school and working life:

- ***Prao***, the work experience programme, designed to
  - -give pupils first-hand experience of working life
  - -help them form an opinion of different kinds of occupations and working environments

At present, pupils are required by regulation to spend 6-10 weeks of compulsory school time in workplaces

- ***Syo***, ie study and vocational guidance, to give pupils information to help them with their choice of career

Under the new curriculum for the compulsory school, which comes into force in July 1995, the school head has special responsibility for organising both these programmes, with the help of the local authority. Most schools have special *Syo* staff working with information and guidance for pupils and parents

These measures should not be seen as isolated from each other. *Prao* can contain elements of *Syo* and vice versa

Some simple devices can help the integration of guidance and the curriculum. Pupils can "negotiate" with their teachers a plan for their learning (individualised curriculum), and be obliged or encouraged to maintain a record of how far they have progressed. "Empowering" the pupil in this way can have other positive effects too:

- In the **UK** the ***National Record of Achievement*** (NRA) is intended to provide a nationally recognised document which individuals can use throughout their life as a record of their achievement, and to plan their personal development. Research in 1992-3 found considerable support of the NRA among colleges, training organisations and employers as a source of information about school-leavers, used mainly at interviews

- By the end of Year 11 (age 16), every pupil has a formal ***Action Plan***, formalising the outcome of the guidance he/she has received. It is used to help training providers draw up a Training Plan for the young people who follow the vocational training (NVQ) route at 16 or 17. Research has shown room for improvement in the extent to which they are in practice used by them or by employers or colleges

Assisting transfer to the next stage

In **Sweden** and **Germany** attempts are also made in a variety of ways to facilitate the transfer from compulsory school to the next stage:

- Pupils are given an opportunity at an early stage during their compulsory school to visit an upper secondary school and find out what goes on there: they may consult *Syo* staff about their choices at upper secondary school

There are two aims here:
- all pupils should be able to receive an upper secondary school education
- the vast majority should be accepted on the study programme of their first choice

Pupils who do not apply or are not accepted on their first choice receive extra study and vocational guidance during the spring term, after which all pupils are able to review their choices

- ***"Handing over conferences"*** and more informal contacts between the compulsory school and the upper secondary school, designed to help the latter to give adequate support to all pupils and especially those with different kinds of learning difficulties from the very beginning of their studies

- In some municipalities, ***in-service training*** is arranged together for both compulsory and upper secondary school teachers aimed at creating as smooth a transfer as possible between the two school forms.

Similarly, in **Germany (Northrhine-Westfalia)**, general-education schools are required to cooperate with the vocational training schools by means of eg mutual information on pedagogic questions, mutual participation in school events, and the participation of general school teachers in vocationally-oriented subject teaching at vocational schools

Lower Saxony is experimenting with an ***"instruction network"*** to help the young people take "that first step" by actually "picking up" the person at the general school and accompanying him/her into the vocational school

4 *AREA-BASED INTERVENTIONS*

ZEPs: primary and secondary level

Box 16 ZEPs and their effects **France**

The ZEP policy

- provided schools which had large numbers of "young people in difficulty" with extra resources: teachers, psycho-pedagogical support, "*surveillants*" (non-teaching staff)
- was local but total in concept, in that it linked up primary and secondary schools and social workers

The selection of ZEPs was based on a battery of socio-economic and educational criteria

Evaluation has been controversial, especially on the need for a longitudinal study. However it looks as though the "ZEP effect" is positive on a number of indicators. The data from one area (Nancy-Metz *Académie*) from 1989-90 onwards indicates

- a larger than average fall in the number of pupils transferring late to *collège*; but
- less reduction (than non-ZEP areas) in repeating rates in the second year of *collège*; but
- better reductions in repeating in the third year
- much less dropping-out, and better rates of staying-on (into the post-compulsory stage) in the ZEP *collèges*, but with most pupils going on to BEP (vocational certificate normally taken one year after completing compulsory school)

France has the largest area-based intervention programme, the ***Zones d'Education Prioritaires*** **(ZEPs)**: the number of zones, schools involved, and pupils affected, has risen steadily since the beginning of the 1980s: 10% of pupils in *collèges* in 1980, 15% in 1990. ZEPs, based on the principle that positive discrimination is desirable and necessary, are a break with a basic principle of French education, that resources should be allocated strictly proportionately to pupil numbers. Some positive results are recorded - see Box 16

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Inter-departmental cooperation

A 5-year programme of inter-ministry cooperation aimed at raising school performance (PIPSE) ran in **Portugal** 1997/88- 1991/92. It linked up 6 ministries: health, education, social affairs and employment, regional affairs, agriculture and food. Dietary improvement, new teaching materials, improved social care, and development of leisure-time activities together resulted in an annual fall in the rate of failure in school of 2%, - from 32% to 23% in the 5 years - as well as a gradual rejection of the inevitability of failure in school

National and regional

A promotion campaign - "Education for all" (PEPT) - also sponsored by several ministries, was started in 1991 and is still running. Its message is to call for basic education in conditions of dignity and success: it is linked to the introduction of 9-year compulsory education. It has run a Demonstration Project which brought together the regional and local authorities in several municipalities in the Northern Region of Portugal concerned with drop-out and the need to help young people's transition to work

The **Portuguese** report, in listing an "agenda" for the future, includes

- introducing universal pre-school education
- adding an extra year of pre-school
- examining each case of early drop-out by joint action between school and social workers
- setting up priority area schools in areas of greatest deprivation and poorest quality of life
- extending the school day for all pupils and adolescents whose parents wish it, especially in disadvantaged areas
- persuading employers not to recruit unqualified young people

At primary school level

Intervention at primary school stage has been the policy in **Ireland**:

For **Ireland**, pre-school provision is seen as "cheaper and more likely to be most effective in the long-run" and the question is whether parents from socially disadvantaged situations will be able to take advantage of it. Two major **Irish** interventions at primary level are set out in Box 17. In addition an important new pre-primary experimental programme has now been started in 6 pre-schools in the most disadvantaged areas

5 A SUCCESSFUL SYNTHESIS IN DENMARK

The **Danish** report points out the very low numbers (under 0.5% of an age-group) leaving compulsory school before completion - the sort of figure that most countries are aspiring to reach. How does it do it? Clearly, there is no one single reason for this kind of success; and there are limits to the extent to which any country's policies and practices are transferable in another.

Nonetheless, the Danish report highlights some aspects which it is worth drawing attention to

The form-teacher system

"One plausible explanation is related to the well-developed system of the *form teacher*. The typical pattern in the Danish *Folkeskole* (11-16 comprehensive compulsory school) is that one teacher, (normally the teacher of Danish) is connected to the same group of pupils from the first form to the completion form (9th or 10th form)

Box 17 Primary-level interventions **Ireland**

In 1984 a *Disadvantaged Areas* special funding scheme was set up. To qualify, primary schools were assessed on indicators:

- how many parents lived in local authority housing
- the number of unemployed families with children in the school
- the number of families with medical cards
- assessment of need by school inspectors

Per capita grants were paid to the schools for the purchase of books and equipment and for home/school/community liaison; and for in-service training. After an official evaluation the rate of grant was increased by 300%. 258 schools are now included, based on these criteria, irrespective of their location

In the same year (1984) a large-scale *Home/School/Community Liaison Project* was launched. Its aims were to

- maximise active participation of the children in the project schools in the learning process, in particular those who might be at risk
- promote active cooperation between home, school, and the relevant community agencies in promoting the educational interests of the children
- develop the parents' awareness of their own capacities to enhance the children' educational process and to assist them develop relevant skills
- disseminate the positive outcomes throughout the school system generally

"Current research would suggest that the project has great potential to tackle educational inequality"

The form teacher has a number of functions related to the pupils' wellbeing, cooperation between the school and families, and the pupils' orientation to social and working life. The form teacher system has existed since the beginning of the century and it has been elaborated in order to handle more complex problems"

The guidance system

The second factor for success in **Denmark** is felt to be the *guidance system* in the last stages of compulsory education, in the 7th, 8th, and 9th forms (age 14-16). It aims at stimulating the school leaver's commitment to further education and training. It also aims to establish a firm basis of information about the possibilities for the 16-19 year group and about working life, in order to enable the young person to make qualified decisions about their future career

The Continuation Schools

The report also relates the **Danish** success to the fact that an increasingly large group of pupils complete their compulsory education outside the *Folkeskole*, in the *Continuation Schools* - in 1994/95 more than 10% of the total population of the 9th and 10th years of the *Folkeskole*. These schools offer an alternative profile, a social and cultural environment for the pupils who are resident in them. More than 100 schools address the needs of a widely differentiated range of pupils

"The schools form an important part of the final stages of compulsory education, especially as regards pupils with lack of motivation." They have become an increasingly important element in the 1980s and 90s.

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Box 18 Educational and vocational guidance in compulsory education **Denmark**

Guidance in the *Folkeskole* (6-16 compulsory school), established according to the School Act of 1975, consists of

- ***teaching activities*** about working life in general, job-profiles, structures in the labour market, and the work environment
- ***work practice***, which gives all pupils the possibility of spending 2 times one week in public and arrived companies. The aim is to give pupils direct experience of the conditions of working life
- ***information arrangements and study visits*** to gymnasia (secondary general schools), commercial schools, agricultural schools, and social and health education schools where the pupils are informed about further educational possibilities and have the opportunity to talk to teachers, guidance officers, and older students

The form teachers are responsible for the information activities and the interviews with pupils and their parents, while the school guidance counsellor organises the work experience and operates as facilitator in support of the form teachers

Recently efforts have been made to improve the quality of the guidance system. The form teachers have no training in careers counselling; the counsellors are now being offered an 8-week training programme in careers counselling, which seems likely to increase their role at the expense of that of the form teachers.

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Chapter 4

Increasing readiness for vocational training

Preface to chapters 4, 5, and 6

In chapter 2 we identified a number of problem areas in the functioning of vocational training, particularly

- ***insufficient preparation for entry to training***
- ***problems relating to trainees' experience of it***

Chapter 3 has looked at the ways in which compulsory schools are trying to improve young people's preparation for entry to training. The next three chapters describe measures which follow on from that stage:

chapter 4 ***Measures aimed at increasing readiness for training***

chapter 5 ***Reforms and improvements in vocational training itself***

chapter 6 ***Measures to improve the skills of teachers and trainers***

Introduction

For the young people in our target groups, the end of compulsory schooling is a key stage:

- those in our first target group, the "school-weary", will disappear from the education and training system - unless they can be persuaded to have another try at it

- some, if not most, of those who are in the second, larger group will face a difficult transition to the next stage: they may enter it late; they may switch courses especially to a lower-level one; and they may drop out or fail to qualify.

We turn therefore now to a whole variety of measures which may be thought of as being designed

- **to persuade young people to enter initial training**
- **to improve their readiness to do so**
- **to increase their chances of completing the course and qualifying.**

These measures should be seen against the background of the kind of initial training systems that countries have inherited from the past, and which they are now trying to modernise.

As we saw in chapter 2, most systems of initial vocational training have restricted or "normal" levels of entry and ages of entry, based on the traditional pattern of young people's progression through compulsory school, into initial training, and so into work and adult life. Such limitations have generated a need for ***preparatory*** or ***"stepping stone"*** measures to help those young people who have not succeeded in following the normal progression through the system, to enter initial training. Once they are in training, there are also a range of supplementary measures in some countries, designed to assist them in various ways so that they do not drop out, but succeed in completing their course or apprenticeship, and qualifying.

Because of their mixed origins and content, these measures are rather hard to classify. Here, in chapter 4 we will deal with the measures which are best thought of as "preparatory" or "stepping stones" to initial training. Then in chapter 5 we will describe those that concern assistance during training itself. The categories in fact are not very distinct. They overlap. But the distinction is nonetheless helpful.

Here therefore we have to consider several groups of preparatory or stepping stone measures:

1a **"Preparatory" measures** as such. This is the label used in Germany. These measures are relatively permanent, in contrast to many labour market measures (on which see Annex 8) which are often of a preparatory character, but have usually been introduced as temporary responses to help young people in periods of high unemployment

1b **Youth Guarantees, Youth/Training Credits, and "Outreach" programmes.** These measures are a response to the difficulty of contacting/identifying the young people in the target group. They seek to mobilise the actors in the youth field behind a common effort to recruit the unqualified young person into training proper or a preparatory measure, using the concept of a universal guarantee or right to training, eg to obtain a minimum basic vocational qualification. They emphasise better packaging and delivery, rather than changes in the content of the training itself

1c **Other "stepping stones"**. These are measures which reflect different or ***alternative*** approaches to content and methods. They may be of a more or less permanent nature, according to their aims and successfulness. They tend to emphasise the particular character of young people in the target groups, and to take therefore a long-term view of the problem, ie that a minority of young people are "hard to reach" - not only hard to contact but also hard to help when you have found them.

1 "PREPARATORY MEASURES"

The country with the most developed "preparatory measures" is **Germany**. They have been designed to meet the needs of a wide range of young people but especially those that are disadvantaged[15]:

1a SCHOOL-BASED MEASURES

▪ ***The vocational preparatory year*** (***Berufsvorbeitungsjahr***) is the classic school-based preparatory measure for disadvantaged young people. It is for pupils who have not found a training place and frequently do not fulfil the entrance requirements for the other measures below

It is mandatory for the disadvantaged young person in some *Länder*. Its goal is training eligibility. In many *Länder*, a young person can attain qualification equivalent to secondary school graduation. Composed of 50% technical practice and 50% technical theory, it is, ideally, taught in small groups of 8-16. Sometimes pupils can familiarise themselves with several vocational fields, but more often only one, and in some cases, ("far from seldom") this means gender-specific vocations

▪ ***Full-time vocational schools***: one- or two-year full-time vocational schools (***Berufsfachschulen***) either help students to obtain a better school certificate and/or impart vocational specific knowledge and skills as an introductory, or partial, qualification for vocational training. In some fields they are tantamount to an extra year of training, their certificates sometimes being required for entry to vocational training proper

▪ ***The basic vocational school year*** (***Berufsgrundschuljahr***) is designed to provide a broad and basic vocational training, eg in the fields of wood- and metal-working. For some (those with good grades) it is in effect a transition period until they find a training place (see below). In some *Länder* it is obligatory for entry to vocational training; in others it is not even recognised by firms as part of training

[15] see Annex 1 for the legal definition of the disadvantaged in Germany

Box 19 Problems with the Vocational Preparatory Year **Germany**

Some *Länder* have given up offering the Vocational Preparatory Year, substituting other courses for it. Criticisms of it include

- "for young people who have had bad experience of school and/or feel themselves to be failures, the Vocational Preparatory Year often proves unsuitable. This is exhibited in high rates of truancy, poor motivation, conspicuous behaviour, aggression, depression, even escape in alcohol, drugs or in psychosomatic illness etc"
- groups are usually too large, up to 25 instead of the intended maximum of 16
- the teaching personnel seldom possess the special education or social-pedagogic competence needed; and the social prestige of being assigned to these types of course is ranked low by them
- formal school regulations pose a hindrance to the flexibility needed to work with the target group

"Many doubt that young people's motivation deficits and related problems can be solved by any approach within the framework of the school system. A survey of the Vocational-Education Teachers' Association of Rheinland-Pfalz in 1993 concluded that the Vocational Preparatory Year in its present form is a faulty design, and recommended replacement of the school by another place of learning, namely autonomous training institutions without fixed class schedules and "without school smell". They saw responsibility being taken by a cooperative circle or network of representatives from the Labour Offices, firms, institutions for youth and social work and independent training institutions and, where appropriate, vocational part-time schools"

Part-time Schooling Centres

In **Belgium (Wallonie)** the CEHR (*Centres d'enseignement à horaire réduit*) ie part-time schooling centres provide those with low compulsory school qualifications with part-time general education up to 18. In principle this should be complemented by part time work experience in a firm but this is not always possible

A bridging year in school

In **Austria** all intending apprentices have a bridging year (or final school year) in Year 9 (the last year of compulsory school) before they can leave school and enter an apprenticeship, while all other pupils are starting their upper secondary (Secondary Level II) courses; this can be interpreted to mean that initial training can be started after 8 years of school education, ie in the last (ninth) year of compulsory schooling

Pre-apprenticeship stage

In **Portugal**, an apprenticeship route to qualification for young people aged 15-24 who had only completed compulsory education (until the recent Reform only 6 years) was established in 1984 and modified in 1988: and for those who had left even earlier, a pre-apprenticeship route was set up in 1991

1b NON-SCHOOL PREPARATORY MEASURES

The **German** "Non-school preparatory measures" are the main responsibility of the Federal Labour Office (*Bundesanstalt für Arbeit*) under Para 40c of the Employment Promotion Law, and are seen as " a flexible instrument for appropriate support for young people's vocational integration, to contribute to lowering the proportion of young people without vocational training, as well as securing a qualified younger generation for the economy"

Besides special education measures in the framework of vocational rehabilitation, there are three types of measures:

- ***Basic Vocational Training*** courses, lasting up to 12 months, with the aim of helping young people increase their readiness to enter regular vocational training (intake 11,000 in 1993. Success rate for entry into vocational training: 49%)

- ***Remedial Training*** courses, also of up to 12 months duration, to give school-leavers not yet eligible for work special assistance to enable them to commence vocational training or enter employment (33,000 young people in 1993. Success rate for entry into vocational training: 32%)

- ***Information-and-Motivation*** courses, to give young people and young adults who are at risk of not entering the working world readiness to take up vocational training, or employment, or a vocational preparatory course (intake 1,600 in 1993; no data on success rates)

Participants can live at a boarding school, and may receive social-pedagogic guidance

The training provided

- is holistic ie it aims to help young people cope with their personal difficulties and development in relation to eg dropping out of vocational training, lack of a school leaving certificate, need for psychiatric treatment, allergies, drugs, criminality, refusal behaviour, language or other cultural difficulty etc

- is phased to help focus progressively on choice of vocation

- emphasises social learning, training for parenthood, and recreation

- uses some modular learning units. In some cases the young person has the possibility of entering and leaving the course at any time

Experience has shown that these measures cannot assist all young people adequately; this has led to a development away from rigid categories towards an open type of measure better adapted to the specific need and problems of the individual participant. Some are aimed at more specific target groups eg preparatory measures aimed at girls prior to entering employment, to foreigners and resettled young people, and also integrative and remedial courses for the "mentally disturbed". There are also problems related to: financial cutbacks, lack of sufficient training for staff, and delays in (annual) funding. Many executing agencies also regret that the Federal Labour Office no longer finances courses for ex-post attainment of the secondary school diploma

Box 20 "Interlinking" **Germany**

"Interlinking" vocational preparation with the first year of initial vocational training is seen as a useful theme for the further development of these measures

Individual agencies relax the internal structures and instead divide young people, teams and workshops into fields (trades). In them, young people still in vocational preparation can, at least part of the time, learn and be coached simultaneously with trainees

Some agencies are considering allowing vocational preparation and training to be carried out by the same team ie staff would accompany the young people over a total period of up to 5 years

1c OTHER SUPPORTING MEASURES

Various *Länder* programmes within the framework of Public Youth Assistance support these measures. Youth Vocational Assistance may provide vocational orientation in schools, preparation for vocational training and actual vocational training, and qualified and social-pedagogically supported employment measures. These aim at young people up to age 17 who are "to a higher degree, dependent upon support to compensate for social disadvantages or to overcome individual handicaps". Their availability is not guaranteed

In the Youth Plans of the *Länder*, the main provision is of

- ***Youth Counselling Offices***: aimed at disadvantaged young people, to help them with career planning and personal development, using individual and group methods, and networks

- ***Youth Workshops***: support activities by young people and adults to develop readiness for vocational training through a mixture of work, counselling, and preparation for training

- ***School social workers***: they work in all types and levels of school (except grammar) aiming to bring social-pedagogic approaches into the school. They also help in guidance, counselling in individual and group work, and help teachers to offer a more holistic approach in their teaching

School social workers face many difficulties including: lack of professional acceptance and status; no reserved place in the curriculum; and lack of a clear conception of the role and value of the social worker on the part of the school, and sometimes also on the part of the headteacher

Two types of course in **Denmark** are of a similar kind:

The **Danish** ***EGU*** course was introduced in 1993. It is a preparatory generic introductory 2-year course to prepare for entry into ordinary vocational education and training. It consists mainly of practical training, with only 20-40 weeks spent on theoretical education. Its aim is to give a young person qualifications which may lead to studies in mainstream technical or commercial education and training, and create the basis for employment in the labour market. On entry to such training, *the young person must be given credit* for the EGU course and if possible also for the practical part of it. It is estimated that 3,000 pupils a year will be using the EGU courses soon

EIFU courses take place at Labour Market Training Centres (AMU Centres) and are targeted at drop-outs and other young unemployed people. They consist of one course period, averaging 9-10 weeks, and one of practical experience lasting normally 4 weeks. Vocational guidance is a central feature, based on workshop teaching. The results are rather good: a large number of pupils, (in the 16-25 age range) enter or reenter ordinary vocational education and training; another large group enter employment

2 *YOUTH GUARANTEES AND OUTREACH MEASURES*

"Youth Guarantees"

In several countries "Youth Guarantee" offers have been set up which undertake to provide a mixture of work experience and training for a limited time to unemployed early school leavers, with a view to preparing and persuading them (backed in some cases by threat of loss of training/unemployment benefit) to enter regular vocational training or an apprenticeship. Finding and contacting ("reaching") the young people is a general problem.

In the **Netherlands**, since 1990, all young people under 20 and unemployed are being offered participation in a "Guarantee" scheme, with a guaranteed offer of 6 months employment with training, on an individual training plan, renewable once for a second 6 month period. The aim is to encourage the young person to enter apprenticeship training. From 1994, the 20-24 age group are to be included

The Youth Employment Guarantee Plan in **Belgium (Flanders)** aims to give the 4,000 young people aged 18-25 who have been unemployed more than 2 years a year's work experience to help them find a job. The government and the social partners have each undertaken to produce 2,000 jobs, though the social partners have not yet done so

The Youth Training scheme in the **UK** is similar in that it "guarantees" an offer of training, but an important difference is that it provides 1 or 2 years of actual training, not preparation for it

The **Spanish** compulsory education reform (LOGSE) envisages supplementary help (PGS), in keeping with the idea of the "Social Guarantee" for those aged 16-21 who have left compulsory school without achieving the relevant certificate, to provide them with basic vocational education to prepare them for entry into work or into specific vocational training. The training will probably be on the lines of the existing School-workshops. PGS are seen as lasting from 6 months to 2 years, and providing young people with accreditation, even if they drop out or do not pass the Competence Test at the end of their course

The problem of whether to link the centres providing PGS to the home schools of the pupil, or to keep them separate on the grounds that the pupil has already rejected school, is still not settled. Open entry, and easy access back to post-compulsory courses are seen as very desirable. The question of how to staff PGS courses is still open too: primary school teachers with some experience of adult education are a possibility. Teams of such teachers, vocational training teachers and social workers are a possibility

Box 21 Profile of the "hard to reach": young people in Youthreach Centres, 1991 Ireland

Experience of secondary school

30% one year or less, or had never transferred from primary
32% 1 - 2 years
23% 2 -3 years
15% 3+ years but without gaining any qualification

Socio-economic background

27% trouble with the law
12% living alone at home
31% abusing alcohol, drugs, or other substances
29% victims of "difficult domestic/community environment such as ongoing violence, intimidation or sexual abuse"
23% had encountered more than one of these difficulties

Presenting problems

17% slow learners
39% of average intelligence but with a specific learning difficulty, usually in literacy
23% were disturbed
41% were difficult to motivate

Destinations of those who left Foundation Training

29% into employment
15% into the Progression year
17% left due to a change in circumstances
15% did not wish to continue
10% left for reasons of poor attendance, serious indiscipline etc
14% left for other reasons

Age of those leaving

21% under 16
34% 16-17
25% 17-18
20% over 18

There is uncertainty how many pupils the PGS will affect; estimates vary between 10% and 40% of an age-group. It will naturally reflect the degree of success in implementing the aims and methods of the new type of compulsory education. In Andalusia it is hoped to keep the figure down to 10-15%. The target group is anyway seen as including pupils with special needs as well as young offenders, and a proportion of young people from ethnic and other minority groups. The problem of these alternative courses proving more attractive than regular school provision in the interim period of the introduction of the reform, and therefore drawing young people away from regular school, is already evident in Andalusia. At least this seems to be a positive indicator of their success in motivating young people

Since 1985, as part of the **Irish** "Social Guarantee", all second-level schools in **Ireland** have supplied to their local FAS (Employment Training Organisation) office bi-annually the names and addresses of all young people who have left school without qualifications and at or about Junior Certificate Standard level. A register is maintained and the target group are identified from this, and attempts are made to recruit them into "Youthreach"

Youthreach is area-based: areas are chosen for the location of its centres by identifying schools with a high incidence of early drop-out. It provides a 1 or 2 year programme, for young people who have been at least 6 months in the labour market, and have left school without formal qualifications or vocational training. It is intended to meet the personal and social development needs of the young person and to provide some of

the competences necessary for work and adult living. It reflects the needs of different areas. The second year offers some progression into a vocational field for those who have not found work. There are currently 101 Youthreach Centres

Youthreach seems to be successful in attracting young people; of an estimated 4,500 unqualified school leavers in 1991, 3,336 entered the programme. Its "alternative" philosophy may be one reason: there is a general consensus in Youthreach that school has not been a happy experience and that *the programme should therefore take place in a non-school setting*

Many trainees drop out at the end of the first year; some spend two years in the first-year Foundation programme, instead of moving ahead into the Progression year which is often poorly provided and not effective. There is a disincentive to re-enter education after the 2 years because the young people lose their training allowance and are too young to claim unemployment assistance

A right to training

A Guarantee is now sometimes expressed in terms of a **right to an individually-designed programme**, rather than just a guaranteed but generalised offer of training. This is being discussed or is already in practice in several countries (**France**, **Germany**, **Denmark**, **Netherlands**, **Norway**, **Sweden, UK**)

In **France**, the CFI (*Crédit Formation Individualisé*) dates from 1989: it offers young people at Level V or below (ie unqualified- see page 12) an individualised, global, training plan based on modular units. It includes a "one-point" contact with all the services available in the "*territoire*" (employment area). Originally with an upper age limit of 15, it is now extended beyond that. There are three phases: assessment and profiling, including all aspects (eg health); catching-up or preparatory courses: and then one of the range of training-and-job contracts, or an alternance-based course, leading to a qualification

135,000 young people took advantage of CFI in 1990. Numbers have declined slightly since, as the backlog has reduced, but also as the number leaving school unqualified has fallen. Problems of queuing for courses have occurred, and the qualification rate is low: of the 97,000 who left or dropped out in 1993, 20,000 obtained a Level V qualification; 9,000 had partial qualification; of the rest, 13,500 went into jobs, and 35,000 dropped out or were not traced. The capacity of the measure to cope adequately with the complex and multiple social and personal problems of the young people in question appears in some doubt

The underlying aim of an individualised training plan is to find an acceptable and effective way to enable the young person to reach the goal of formal, recognised qualification

In **Sweden** every municipality is obliged to offer young people under 20 who are not on a national programme *an individually designed programme*. This is primarily intended to stimulate the pupil to transfer subsequently to a national programme. A pupil can combine employment aimed at vocational training with studies. Such apprenticeship training is spread over three school years and includes the core subjects. The approach is described in more detail in Annex 3

"Following-up"

The existence of "Guarantees" and "Rights" is not in itself enough to recruit all the young people for whom they are intended. Some young people do not easily respond to official "offers", mediated through complex bureaucracies. Experience shows that, for the hard to reach, more active intervention is needed on the part of the authorities. "Following-up" - in

the sense of maintaining or establishing contact after the young person has left school - can take different forms.

It may

- **be school-based (France, Ireland)**
- **be coordinated by a community-based youth team (Denmark)**
- **be the task of a separate service (see the Norwegian example below)**
- **be run by a Youth Service (as in Germany, see Box 39)**
- **depend at least partly on young people belonging to "clubs" (as in the UK example in Box 24)**
- **be reinforced by networking at local/regional level (see the German and Dutch examples in Box 39 and pages 118-9)**
- **also use young people themselves as agents of contact/information and as resource persons (as in the Youth Initiative Projects, see below, page 82)**

Or there may of course be a combination of several of these - in the case of the French *Missions Locales*, with central and local political support in addition to technical coordination.

Compulsory registration of, or by, the young person is becoming more common in these approaches.

Box 22 DIJEN measures **France**

In 1992/93 106,685 young people were contacted and given an assessment interview. 13,742 reentered initial training.

The other main measures on which the DIJEN can draw to provide training adapted to the needs of the young person, together with participation figures for 1992/93, are

CIPPA: 10-month alternance-based orientation and catching-up course (12,726)

CEEFI: natural follow-on after a CIPPA,: 1-year of preparatory work experience in a firm, followed by 2 years of qualifying training in a firm (1,368)

MOREA: "*Repréparation*" module for young people who have failed an examination (BEP, CAP, BAC) to assess what went wrong and put it right (6,824)

ITHAQUE: short "waiting-room" course for those wanting to join a regular course at the beginning of the next year (about 700)

FCIL: 3-9 months alternance course to prepare for employment (10,877)

ARE: help in job-finding (922)

In **France**, the Ministry of Education launched its DIJEN initiative (*Dispositif d'insertion des jeunes de l'Education Nationale*) in 1986 and it was confirmed and strengthened in the *Loi d'Orientation* of 1989, which said that "Preparing young people for entry into working life is one of the basic tasks of the school",

and defined the target group particularly as those who have left school within the last year, with or without qualifications, whose destinations were not known to the headteacher. The process to be undertaken is similar to other measures (assessment, individualised training plan, alternance-based training, use of existing courses at local level, etc) but the distinguishing feature is that the school is expected to take the initiative in finding and contacting the young person

In 1990/91 an evaluation showed that one third of the target group had been contacted. In 1993, over 100,000 young people were contacted for an assessment interview, and afterwards about half had gone on one of the preparatory courses (see Box 22) while about 20% went straight into normal initial training

The 5-year law on Employment of 1993 has reinforced and widened this role

All young people in **Denmark** are required to register within 2 weeks of moving house, which provides the base for local services to contact them, after the information has been passed on to them. Since there has been a requirement that the guidance service should make contact with all early school leavers twice in the 2 year period after they have left school, and youth education institutions must report whenever a trainee is dropping out, the necessary structure exists already for a "follow-up" service to operate. The local Youth Guidance Service has from 1993 acquired an even more central role in coordinating a local network of cooperation betwen schools, municipalities, vocational colleges, and the local labour market

Box 23 How many fragments? **Norway**

The "fragments", as seen by the Blegen Commission, were divided among:

- parents

- the state under the Social Welfare Act for those not able to support themselves

- the School Guidance Clinic, which is obliged to offer help to young people after leaving compulsory school

- the upper secondary school, responsible for providing special education where the individual is enrolled in it

- the Labour Market Authorities, whose role is limited to trying to provide suitable employment related to the qualifications of the applicant

- the Child Protection Authorities, in cases where the welfare of the child is at risk

The **Norwegian** Blegen Commission reported that "responsibility for following up young people is fragmented, incoherent, and inefficient. The system partly relies on the initiative of young people themselves seeking to solve their own problems". In proposing a new Follow-up Service to deal with this, it established 4 principles for its work;

- it should follow up all young people aged 16-19 who were neither in education nor training nor employed
- its aim should be to motivate and prepare the individual for participation in an education or training course or in working life
- the Service should be organised as part of the existing administrative structure at the county level
- it should establish routines for cooperation between the different public sectors ie Labour, Education, Social Welfare, and Child Protection authorities

The Follow-up Service was piloted 1991-93 in six areas. The trial highlighted particularly the lack of adequate provision for the age-group, adapted to the needs of the person and enabling the person to obtain some formally recognised qualifications. Greater flexibility in the upper secondary school's provision was recommended. Establishing a reliable information system about the target group was another area of difficulty, especially about those who lived in densely-populated areas. (As in Youthreach in **Ireland**, schools did not use effective routines, or the same criteria). Earlier reporting might help prevention

The Follow-Up Service was established in counties as part of Reform 94; it must register and contact all young people who have not applied, or have dropped out of, upper secondary education but have not lost their legal right to it

Box 24 "Choices" **UK**

"Choices" is a service developed in one area (South and East Cheshire) to help young people who need extra help to enter training or employment. It offers

- a need-led service
- "mentors", who conduct in-depth initial interviews and assessment using the young person's Record of Achievement, and may act as advocates for their client with other services, as well as providing advice and guidance
- very flexible provision: it could be "training in presentation skills, assertiveness, survival cookery, or talks by the police, as well as Wordpower, and Numberpower (basic skills courses); .. and specialist services such as speech therapy or counselling"
- inter-agency liaison: more informal than formal - but "agencies' assessments and solutions may conflict"

The idea of associating the young person, including those with difficulties in entering training, in the search for a solution to their needs, is an approach strongly in fashion in the **UK**. Youth Credits, "Careerships" and "Traineeships" are all nationally-developed concepts which reflect an "empowerment" philosophy, whereby the young person is treated as a consumer, exercising choice and some measure of control.

Two areas use a "club" as the focus for keeping young people engaged in education and training at the end of compulsory schooling. The "Prospect Club" is a way of associating young people themselves into the local group of providers of training and guidance. For the disadvantaged young person there is another club - "Choices" - offering extra help, guidance and support to early school leavers who need help before they can join a regular vocational training course. See Box 24

The Missions Locales

The ***Missions Locales*** **(Local Task-forces)** are the most developed initiative in this field of "search and contact" ie identifying unqualified and unemployed young people in a local area and trying to arrange that they are given an individual training plan which will help them reintegrate into learning or employment.

A brief picture of the ***Missions*** is given in Box 25. In view of their unique character, involving the local political structure in finding solutions to young people's needs, and so not only assisting young people directly but developing the provision of all types of service and facility for young people at local level, they are described more fully in Chapter 7.

Box 25 ***Missions Locales*** **France**

Aims

- provide information, assistance, and guidance to young people between age 16 and 25
- mobilise all local institutions with responsibility for assisting young people's transition into employment (training bodies, ANPE; social organisations, DASS, local authorities, voluntary bodies) to define solutions adapted in such a way that those who come to the *Missions* can find ways to integrate socially
- contribute to the development and implementation of local policies designed to assist entry into employment

Approach: required to be holistic; to consider the totality of the target group's needs: employment, training, health, housing, recreation; and therefore to take a partnership approach

Sponsorship:

- at national level, coordinated by the *Délégation Interministerielle à l'Insertion professionnelle et sociale des Jeunes en difficulté*, and supported by the Ministries of Work, Employment, and Vocational Training
- at local level, co-financed by the local authority (*commune*), who also support by lending staff and supplying other resources

Main fields of activity: employment, training, but also culture, recreation, housing, health

Extent: 50 in 1982, 227 in 1992

Coverage: nearly national: usually PAIO (all-age Information, Assistance, and Guidance Centres) exist where the *Missions* do not

Young people assisted: 308,000 were in touch with the 194 *Missions* in 1991

Qualification level of those assisted: 55% unqualified (below Level V); 34% Level V; 11% above Level V

3 *ALTERNATIVE INSTITUTIONS AS "STEPPING STONES" TO TRAINING*

A whole report could be written about alternative provision, and it seems an ideal area for further Community cooperation. A few outlines are all that is possible here, apart from noting the importance of clear policies towards such provision in any system today.

There are two aspects. The first concerns the style of provision. Training and guidance have their limitations when it comes to remotivating and restoring the confidence and self-esteem of some of the young people we are concerned with here.

It is encouraging therefore that there are a number of innovatory approaches which address these psychological and social difficulties in the first instance. Several of them are based on engaging the young person in some form of productive activity as a way of getting him/her interested in learning.

Denmark's initiatives are a good example: they

- take a holistic approach, addressing the young person's total situation and problems, in order to help them regain their sense of self-esteem, self-confidence and direction
- sometimes offer boarding, or at least all-day, provision

- emphasise practical experience as the starting point for relearning the rewards of learning
- are aimed at enabling the young person either to get a job or to enter education and training

The Production Schools

Perhaps the most innovatory institutions in this whole field are the Production Schools.

There are now 120 ***Production Schools*** in **Denmark**, - independent institutions set up by the local authorities, and with managing boards which must include representatives of the local labour market organisations. In these schools, *production is used as a pedagogical instrument to initiate training*. The special characteristics of the schools are great flexibility of curriculum and teaching methods as well as their close association with the market, since products are sold under market conditions. The schools must provide practical work, productive activities, and theoretical education. Young people up to age 29 are eligible. The schools accept them from a wide range of backgrounds, and offer opportunities to them to try out different trades and skills ranging from (in one school) office and data-processing, through media and textiles, to carpentry, food preparation, and agriculture and horticulture

The schools are not residential though they have a strong home-like atmosphere: the length of stay varies considerably but it is not normally more than 12 months. Enrolment can take place at any time. There are no formal "terms". Students receive a modest weekly allowance, sufficient to give them financial independence

The schools work closely with the local community to try to help their ex-students to find a job. Close links of all kinds with their local communities are a strong feature of the schools and they are usually financially helped by them

All staff must have had trade experience as well as being professionally qualified as teachers.

Many of the students move into either a job or training

"Alternative school units"

Experience of work, and of production, can be combined with learning in different ways. Within **Norway**, a range of models are being tried out, some more closely associated with regular schools, while others are more like regular firms

In **Norway**, "***alternative school units***" exist at upper secondary school level as well as compulsory school (see chapter 3 above) under the name of APO, standing for work (*Arbeid*), production (*Produksjon*) and education (*Opplæring*)

Like the lower secondary provision, which they resemble in many ways, these units may exist as internal or external units. They also resemble the Danish Production Schools. They do not lead to any formal qualifications but seek to prepare pupils to apply, or reapply, to enter the upper secondary school

APO may come to play a more significant part in the education and training of 16-19 year-olds after the implementation of the new upper secondary school reform and when the Follow-up Service starts to operate (see below in chapter 7). It seems to represent a *type of flexible provision* that may accommodate pupils who need a programme that differs from mainstream provision

The vision for the future is that it should provide opportunities for pupils to collect units of competence making use of the modular structure of the new curricula by

- designing individual programmes out of existing mainstream courses in addition to work practice and production in school

- providing work practice that may count as part of apprentice training and be deducted from required served time for an occupational certificate in various trades. (A tripartite commission is currently examining the recognition of vocational qualifications at a lower level than full occupational certificates; even if pupils on APO cannot obtain full certificates after three years of training it seems reasonable that they should obtain something and there seems to be need for smaller units of competence related to curriculum modules)

Box 26 Large-scale "alternative provision": the Drammen Work Institute **Norway**

Alternative training is provided in Drammen (near Oslo) by an innovative "Work, Education and Training Institute", a large autonomous institution which is regarded as a possible model for the future expansion of this type of provision. Its features are

- to provide **individual plans** for each of its pupils (140 young people, 50 immigrants and refugees, and 10 functionally-impaired persons, - a total of 200 places)
- **entry** at any time and extended stay for those that need it, but basically centred on a 1-year course combining education in compulsory school subjects with some work practice
- all **theory** is related to practical work
- a partly-separate section for **manufacture**: a workshop that employs 20 people and an additional 5 with functional impairments and a textile workshop for immigrant women
- **funding**: 85% funds from the Labour Market Authorities, the rest from the counties, negotiated every 6 months
- **staff**: a majority of the (more than 17) trainers have no formal teacher qualifications but are experienced workers and have been selected for their strong commitment to their occupation, and as identification figures for their pupils
- the courses are not part of any formal accreditation system: the emphasis in the vocational training is on **developing social skills**, the ability to cooperate, solving conflicts, learning to learn, etc. To maintain this focus, the Institute wishes to remain autonomous, but regrets that pupils are not given extra credits for the training they have received when they apply for a place in an upper secondary school.
- **size**: the large size of the Institute is seen as conducive to social learning which is one of the Institute's main concerns
- **an alternative culture**: the Institute is seen as needing a separate and different identity and culture from that of the school: many of its pupils are "losers" and averse to school and do not want to identify with it

There is concern that APO units

- should be well integrated into the upper secondary school system, and not become independent separate institutions

- should have simple entry procedures and be able to meet pupils' needs by admitting them at any time of year

APO, like alternative provisions at the compulsory level, has grown up from the grass roots. Originally there was some conflict between municipalities who originated them, and the Labour Market Authorities, over responsibility for provision of courses for the unemployed. But this has been resolved. The APO movement has something of a crusading innovative spirit about it

"Entreprises d'Insertion"

The French equivalent of these Nordic alternative learning environments has originated in the employment sector, rather than education. "*L'insertion par l'économique*"[16] is seen as relevant to all those who have difficulty in escaping unemployment, not just the young, or the disadvantaged young, though there is agreement that the approach may be particularly suited to their needs.

In the words of the **French** Interdepartmental Committee for the Evaluation of Public Policy and Planning, in 1993, "

> ***"The fact is that there are disadvantaged young people who need immediate employment but who are totally unable to function in a competitive job situation. Hence the need to create hybrid structures, situated in the market economy as productive bodies, but managed, financed and located in society in such a way as to enable them to assist disadvantaged young people"***

Box 27 The Transition Firms (EI) **France**

Two kinds of "***Insertion***" bodies exist: ***Entreprises d'Insertion***, and ***Associations d'Insertion*** (EI and AI) but only EI are concerned with young people, the AI working in the service sector and basically providing a "temporary staff" service to other firms. This latter appears less suitable for providing the support that young people need

The Ministries of Labour and Social Affairs pay grants for staff in the EI which used to cater only for young people up to age 25, but that limit was lifted in 1988. They get favourable loan terms by virtue of state guarantees of their risks. Employees (as opposed to staff) may not have more than 2-year contracts, and may be on any of the normal "contracts" for assisting linked employment and training

There were 410 EI (and 940 AI) in 1992, providing the equivalent of 40,000 full-time posts. In 1991, about half were providing non-commercial services, a quarter commercial. EIs had on average 11 "*insertion*" employees and 15 permanent staff. Two-thirds of them were employing disadvantaged young people, about a quarter of them under 26

Although many aspects are unclear eg the content of the training, and the extent of utilisation of other initiatives, an evaluation in 1993 reported good results: from a sample of 24 EIs, 56% of participants made a successful transition ("*insertion*") ie into a job or training since entry to training was regarded followed by the evaluators as a successful transition, after a brief stay (less than 6 months for 87% of participants)

The aims of "***Entreprises d'Insertion*** "Assisted Employment Firms") set up in this way are therefore a mixture of the "economic" and "social":

[16] "Assisted employment" - but the phrase is perhaps best not translated

- to use vacant areas of the commercial and non-commercial economy to carry out training tasks for target groups of people who are outside the labour market (the young, and the long-term adult, unemployed)

- to overcome their cumulative difficulties - social isolation, psychological inadequacy, and impoverishment, through providing them with work as a means to (re)socialisation and different forms of social support to help them regain their independence.

What these innovatory firms (which were previously known as "*Entreprises Intermédiaires*" when they were first launched in 1987) have in common with the schools and units just described is

> ***"the obligation to produce saleable products or services on the open market, which in turn means that production and work conditions must be close to those in normal firms, and makes it easier for the individual to achieve a successful transition into normal employment"***

"Working is itself considered to provide support for learning: so is the organisation of production". The similarity to "the use of production as a pedagogical instrument" in the Danish Production Schools quote above is striking.

In **Belgium (Flanders)** "bridging" projects are incorporated in part-time secondary education with a somewhat similar objective

> Young people who have no chance on the labour market because of their background, are offered alternative work experience with the accent on attitude development and raising self-confidence especially in terms of qualification for work, and with a view to making them employable on the labour market in the short term So far only about 100 young people a year have taken part. But the projects have served as an important indictor of the problems of deprivation and potential ways of doing something to help, - even if in employment terms these projects do less well than the sandwich type
>
> "Evaluation studies have shown that deprivation is a concept which covers many things and that training is not always the best way of doing something about it"

Youth Initiative Projects

Experience of work and of risk-taking in a project which young people have developed for themselves is the hallmark of the Youth Initiative Projects (YIPs) supported in all Member States through the PETRA Programme since 1988. Many of them also play a role as a stepping stone to training or employment

> 1,119 YIPs have so far been assisted. They are projects managed, controlled and executed by young people themselves. They involve action at local level, with a commitment to provide services to other young people, whether by the dissemination of information or the transfer of skills. They aim to develop the creativity, initiative and enterprise. For disadvantaged young people, according to an evaluation in 1991, the projects are invaluable for building up self-esteem and preparing young people to enter regular training.

So much for the various forms of preparatory and stepping stone measures. We now turn to look at what is being done to reform initial training itself, and to help disadvantaged young people succeed in it.

Chapter 5

Improving initial vocational training

Introduction

In this chapter we shall look at new, and already established, measures in vocational training which favour disadvantaged young people. We shall examine them under two headings: general reforms, and special measures.

It is not a coincidence, as we shall see, that the first of these are to be found in countries where vocational training is exclusively or mainly provided by school-based training, with relatively small apprenticeship systems[17]; while the second - the special or supplementary measures - are mainly found in Germany which has mainly apprenticeship-based training.

In the majority of countries in this study, then these general reforms are part of the evolution of post-compulsory education and training as a whole.

In almost all of them, they are accompanied by a much greater use of alternance ie periods of work experience in firms (on widely varying patterns). This has meant that the systems in the two groups of countries are drawing steadily closer together in one important respect: a common interest in improving the coordination of the two halves of training - the part that takes place in school and the part that takes place in the firm.

This common interest is of considerable importance here, in that the need for better coordination of the two parts, as well as being one of the most problematical areas for both systems, appears to present special difficulty for the young people in our target group.

[17] ie all the countries in this study except Germany and Austria. Denmark has features of both groups: 60% of training is in firms, and trainees have contracts with firms; but its reforms are conceived as part of the evolution of the upper secondary school system

1 GENERAL REFORMS

We can best understand the general direction of the majority of the reforms by looking first at what is happening in the Nordic countries.

The Nordic countries

Denmark, Norway, and Sweden are all engaged in substantial reforms of the upper secondary school, and **Finland** in several experiments. With successful and well-established systems already in place, their reforms are broadly characterised by

- **free access** (ie a universal entitlement to upper secondary school)
- **fewer specialisations** (moving towards 16 *lines* ie specialisations in Sweden, 25 at present in Finland)
- **decentralised control and management**, - so as to permit
- **modularisation, to give more individualised curricula** and
- more **responsiveness to local requirements**
- more **holistic teaching methods** to keep up motivation and reduce drop-out

Box 28 Principles of the 1991 Reform **Denmark**

- *free access* for all young people who have completed 9-year compulsory *Folkeskole*

- *individualised curriculum:* 1/6 of total school time to be used for optional subjects chosen by the trainee

- *stimulating motivation by relating teaching to the vocational interest of the trainee*: holistic teaching approaches to be used:
  - integrating vocational and general subject content
  - taking the vocational qualification as the starting point for the development of social, general and personal skills

- *differentiation*: courses to be pupil-centred ie related to the specific needs and level of the individual

Because these countries start from such a relatively high level of transfer by young people into the upper secondary school, these reforms, with their emphasis on achieving higher rates of success and qualification, are very relevant

Denmark is engaged in an Action Plan designed to implement the laws which reformed the vocational education and training system in 1989-91 see Boxes 28 and 29. The reform is characterised by

- the alternance principle, with 60% of total training time being spent on practical work experience in one or more approved firms

- the system must provide not only vocational trade skills but also transversal and general skills; and allow for different access routes and transitions between lines (courses)

Box 29 "Education for All" Action Plan **Denmark**

"Education for All", an Action Plan designed to help implement the reforms of vocational education and training approved in 1991, was presented in Parliament in November 1993

Its overall aim is to create a more flexible, efficient and pupil-centred system of youth education in the years up to 2000. Its general objectives are

- The pupil should be brought into focus
- All young people should be challenged
- All types of youth education should develop the personality and creativity of the pupils
- The youth education system should make individual educational sequences possible
- The development of school leaders and teachers should be stimulated through experiments and development projects in schools

The Action Plan has 9 action points, which range from the development of a network of guidance services to the establishing of inter-ministerial cooperation in a joint effort with regard to late-developing and disabled young people. Many of the points are described in relevant sections of this report

- the social partners have comprehensive influence on the system, being involved at all levels: national, regional and school

Norway's "Reform 94", effective from 1 August 1994 (see Box 30) has much in common with the Danish. It grants all young people the right to a place in an upper secondary school, and three years of schooling (extendable to 5 for special needs pupils), by admission to one of 3 course options chosen by the young person. Applicants may not necessarily be admitted to the course of their first choice. The supply of places is regarded as sufficient and well-distributed geographically, though in practice there are limitations on entry to a very few popular branches eg hairdressing and printing

The Danish reform also adopted the principle of "holistic teaching approaches" ie ensuring that the vocational schools provided training which integrated vocational and general subjects, and practical learning with theoretical learning, to motivate and assist the learning process; and to ensure that specific professional skills as well as general qualifications were developed. The fundamental idea is that the point of departure must be the professional qualification, in order to motivate the young people who have chosen, and are committed to, a specific vocation; and that links with general, personal and social skills should be built up from that

Modularisation is now in widespread use. Its value in the construction of a system which permits multiple pathways into the labour market, and an integrated system of initial and continuing training, have been stressed already. Probably the most extensive modular system has been in use in **Scotland** since 1985 (see Box 9) but there are now many others too eg in the **Netherlands** where all short (2-year) vocational courses (kmbo) are based on a modular structure.

Sweden has been engaged in a comprehensive reform of its upper secondary system, based on decisions taken between 1989 and 1993 - see Box 31. The reform has adopted modular units ("courses") as the structure of provision, on the grounds that modularisation

- allows pupils to influence their own education
- makes it easier to update content in response to faster-changing needs
- allows local needs and job opportunities to be catered for more easily
- allows a more clearly defined vocational orientation than the national programmes and branches can provide

Box 30 Reform 94 **Norway**

- A reorganisation of foundation courses reducing the number from over 100 to 13. The new foundation courses will provide a broader content and will qualify for a wider range of options during the second and third year of upper secondary school

- Development of options after the completion of foundation courses which provide clear routes towards vocational qualifications

- Development of certification requirements for crafts, industrial and service occupations in several new areas of work

- Development of a new apprenticeship system with the objective of extending the number of apprenticeship places radically, aiming for one third of the year group

- A general statement of common purposes and aims for compulsory and upper secondary education has been written. New curricula are being developed for all courses in upper secondary education. These courses have a modular structure and apply to all categories of students, young people as well as adults

- A single coordinated Follow Up Service is being developed for the group of young people who are neither employed nor enrolled in education nor training courses

Box 31 Upper secondary school reforms **Sweden**

The main features are:

- decentralisation and the use of management by objectives, focusing on results achieved, instead of control by administrative rules and financial subsidies

- greater freedom for schools to decide their own programmes in line with the national aims

- more freedom for pupils to choose their courses, in compulsory school and upper secondary school

- more freedom for parents in choice of school for their children

- minimum standards are defined, which local authorities must see are reached by all pupils: where pupils do not reach them, the authorities must set aside extra resources

- the grading system is related to the goals and standards and supported by nationwide grading criteria

- a gradual transition to 16 3-year national programmes, replacing all the lines and most of the special courses of the old upper secondary school, is taking place (1992/3-1995/6): education will be course-based ie modular and will require a series of choices by pupils

- individual programmes and a specially designed programme will cater for pupils with additional needs

- allows pupils to combine courses (units) preparing for further studies and vocational courses and to create their own study programmes based on individual choice

- allows pupils to go more slowly or quickly, at their own level of competence, through the upper secondary school than the normal 3-years
- permits pupils to start at their own level of competence, which makes links with compulsory school easier

Free access means state support for students, regardless of destination:

In **Sweden**, to ensure equivalence of access, school support measures are accompanied by economic ones. Noone should be prevented from study by lack of economic resources. These measures comprise grants to the family and measures to increase accessibility:

- a child allowance up to age 16
- student aid in the upper secondary school up to age 20 (of the same value as child allowance)
- after age 20, study loans and grants are available
- adult study assistance is also available, related to the adult's income before starting to study.
- access: local authorities must ensure that children in compulsory school do not have to live away from home in order to attend school, since they need the help and support of their parents

The benefits of student aid have been studied: it had most benefit to children for families on low income, and had somewhat reduced the importance of parents' income and educational background on the choice of study line or study programme

The aim of adult study assistance is to recruit the least educated and give them at least an education equivalent to compulsory school. In fact, its effects have been stronger in the upper levels of the target group ie the ones with relatively high education

Providing institutions (schools/colleges) may be encouraged, or required, to collaborate in order to offer wider choice to students

In **Finland** general education institutions and vocational education institutions are joining up, in an experiment, to make it possible for a student studying in one school to include some subjects from an another institution in his/her course, and to mix general and vocational subjects and work experience. In another experiment, higher education institutions are combining to form a *fachhochschule* offering many branches of higher education

Many of these ideas are being pursued in other countries too:

In **Italy**, an Education Ministry decree (1992) set out a new framework for all *Istituti Professionali di Stato* ie the state Vocational Training Schools (IPS) base on the successful curriculum development experiment *Progetto 92*. It

- increased the general education content of IPS courses, getting away from the old low-level vocational image, and providing virtually a common curriculum of general education in the first year
- reduced the number of qualifications from 140 to 18
- introduced a modular approach, and flexibility in curricula and teaching methods
- permitted some individualisation
- included tests of transverse skills and relational ability into the certificate examinations

The new framework leads to

- after 3 years study, a vocational certificate of value on the labour market
- after 5 years study, a vocational diploma giving access to higher education, organised in cooperation with the Regional training authority

In **Spain**, the new law (LOGSE - see above) calls for the replacement of all existing school-based vocational training by two new levels of broad training, at intermediate level (FPSM) for pupils who have completed compulsory education; and higher level (FPES), for those who have completed the Baccalaureate. They will include a period of work experience or Training in Industry (FCT). Although implementation has begun, it will probably not be completed until 2000. The old and new systems will coexist until then

In **Luxemburg**, the PROF development project launched in 1991 set out a methodology by which teaching aims and curricula in vocational training should be defined, implemented and assessed so as to ensure that it reflected current needs

In collaboration with the relevant representatives of industry and commerce it called for the definition of
- the practical skills required in different vocational training courses
- the key skills required in a specific vocational training which would enable the practical skills to be acquired and used in a flexible way

It envisages
- the integration of practical and theoretical training
- building up learning from activity related to the vocational field
- promoting inter-disciplinary learning

Other school-based systems

The recent reforms in the **Netherlands** and the **UK** have much in common with the Nordic ones. For instance they also strongly emphasise

- **access**
- **flexibility**
- **progression,** assisted by a coherent and comprehensive qualifications structure
- **decentralisation** of management and control, to local/regional and school/college levels.

There are however some differences of emphasis or priority eg on the need to develop a unified system of qualifications:

In the **Netherlands**

- a basic concept is the idea of a "smooth" or gradual transition through compulsory school and initial training and onto the labour market, made possible by later decision-taking about choice of career, and the use of the common core curriculum up to age 15, with the possibility of some pre-vocational variation within it

- a system of "open VET" (vocational education and training) is the target, merging the apprenticeship system, mbo, and courses for adult education and training into one system offering integrated training for young people and adults; the key concepts are accessibility and qualifying for the labour market

- the comprehensive 4-level qualifications structure to be developed will bring together mbo (full-time senior secondary vocational training) and the apprenticeship system (part-time senior secondary vocational training), and include an *assistent* level (Level 1), below the so-called "minimum starting qualification" (see above under Youth Guarantees). Key aims here are to improve access to vocational training and avoid drop-out

- "programmatic (or curriculum) profiles" are being designed to give a broad vocational character to a part of post-compulsory education: they will contain related content, better connection of subjects, and new attainment targets. This will be combined with a reduction of the number of courses to bring about greater transparency of choice

In the UK, "the keys to the logic of the system are the new qualifications structure, and the individual's access to it, rather than the particular institutions where learning takes place. In such a system all training is mainstream, which is explicitly defined to include the lowest levels of qualification ie ...below NVQ Level 1"

Box 32 Youth Credits **UK**

As a way of strengthening the negotiating power of the young person, and of increasing "empowerment" and motivation, all young school leavers are now being issued, at the time of leaving full-time education at age 16 or 17, with *"Youth Credits"*, ie vouchers which show a money value, typically of at least £1000. The stated aims are to

- motivate the individual to train and to train to higher standards
- encourage employers to invest in training
- establish an efficient market in training

Research in the pilot stages showed that while 66% of young people did not think the Credits had affected their training in any way, more than half reported that they "had made me want to find training and employment" and that they "have made me feel in charge of my training". Training credits appear so far to have made little or no impact on employers' and training providers' behaviour. The scheme is to be made nationwide by 1996

Other measures reinforcing the approach in the UK are the use of

- **Youth Credits** - see Box 32
- **"Records of Achievement"** (which the individual holds, and can be valuable as interview-discussion material) and
- **"Action Plans"** which must be drawn up and agreed by the trainee as the basis for the training contract to be offered

All these approaches aim towards the creation of multiple pathways through the system, (or a "comprehensive pathway system") to provide the variety of response that may be required to meet the needs of all young people including those who are disadvantaged

In the UK, "for the most part, the system has taken enormous strides towards inclusiveness...eg the enormous development which is taking place to develop curricula, standards, and qualifications where almost anyone can take part. The unit structure of qualifications and the explicit provision for progression mean that, in theory at least, there are possibilities for everyone to progress as far as their capacities allow

"The less-advantaged are covered by these developments, but they are not treated as a special case: rather, they are treated as part of a continuum, with emphasis on pathways and ladders, information and access, achievement not failure, in order to help them to be included"

Ireland is also using modularisation and giving priority to revising its qualifications structure, though there is still a way to go to achieve progression and a "comprehensive pathway system":

> A major task (in **Ireland**) is to provide formal vocational training for a wider range of occupations than at present. Strengthening the apprenticeship system, and extending it to new areas, are also seen as important. Almost 3,000 young people are recruited each year, but competition has pushed up the entry requirements. Revised entry procedures, a modular structure, and certification based on standards instead of time served, are among the changes being made. Many of the problems associated with vocational courses lie in the lack of systematic formal assessment and certification procedures, though the National Council for Vocational Awards has made significant advances in dealing with that aspect

> **Ireland** has a number of schemes and projects set up by the Education and Labour Departments in the 1970-80s to address youth unemployment and school drop-out: the most extensive of these was a curriculum response in vocational schools, intended to prepare young people either for work or for entry to further education and training: Pre-employment courses (1977) which evolved into the Education Department's *VPT or Vocational Preparation and Training courses* in schools, lasting 1 or 2 years, bridging the gap between traditional education and the world of work. They comprise 3 parts: vocational studies, work experience, and preparation for working life; and provide training through 60 different modules, which permit responsiveness to local needs and conditions

> They have developed as a significant part of the educational system, but suffer from lack of systematic certification, thereby depriving young people of the opportunity to progress further from them. This may be addressed by a new joint committee of the Employment and Education Departments formed to facilitate an integrated education and training response to the needs of the labour market

Partnership (ie with the social partners) is emphasised in many developments (see also chapter 7 for more on this).

> In **Belgium (Wallonie)** a reform of technical-vocational education and training is to be initiated by a Working Group in which the social partners will be collaborating with government and teachers. It will centre on the development of vocational profiles related to skills needed on the labour market

In **Portugal**'s case, the social partners have been brought into the actual provision of new school facilities:

> **Portugal** has been developing since 1989 a new type of vocational school, by joint initiative between the Education and Employment Departments, based on partnership initiatives by a variety of bodies. 170 ***Vocational Schools*** now exist, catering for about 23,000 young people

> In 1990 substantial changes were also made to strengthen and diversify the apprenticeship system: apprenticeships are now available in 27 sectors, and at levels I, II, and III of the EU classification. Entry conditions and the duration of courses were made more flexible; and some modules were introduced. It remains the only training avenue for those who leave school early (after 6 years' compulsory education) or drop out

2 SUPPLEMENTARY HELP FOR DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS

We turn now to **Germany,** where there are large-scale programmes on behalf of the disadvantaged in vocational training. They span support in regard to

- **curriculum**
- **guidance and tutoring**
- **the coordination of learning in the firm with that in the school**
- **the personal and social life of the trainee.**

As well as large-scale, they are also innovative. The approach used in ***"Social-pedagogically oriented Vocational Training"*** is therefore of particular interest

A programme for ***Assistance in Vocational Training for Disadvantaged Young People*** was created by the German Federal Ministry of Science and Education in 1980, in response to the shortage of in-plant training places, particularly for young people with poor school qualifications and/or social problems, and because of the dwindling supply of jobs for unqualified people. The programme, under the theme *"Qualified Vocational Training for All"*, later became part of the Employment Promotion Law and has emerged into Germany's biggest instrument for assistance in initial vocational training for disadvantaged young people. It is now known as "Assistance to the Disadvantaged", with a legally-defined target group (see Annex 1). Temporarily, young people living in regions with above-average training-deficits, as is currently the case in all 5 new federal states, are also eligible for vocational training positions in non-plant institutions; they are known as the "market-disadvantaged"

"Assistance to the Disadvantaged" now consists of two parts

- ***"Non-plant Initial Vocational Training"*** ie full initial training, leading to a recognised qualification, for disadvantaged persons in non-plant institutions
- ***"Training Secondary Assistance" (TSA)***, under which disadvantaged young people who have an in-plant training place receive additional remedial instruction/tutoring and socio-pedagogic guidance

Training in non-plant centres cannot be provided if "Training Secondary Assistance" is sufficient help

"Training Secondary Assistance" (TSA)

The aim of TSA is to encourage firms to train young people who do not entirely fulfil the requirements for in-plant vocational training. The young person receives 2-8 hours a week additional remedial instruction from a non-plant institution; one social pedagogue is available to every 36 young people. The pedagogic approach is similar to that of non-plant training ie

- it is based on a competence (as opposed to deficit) approach, emphasising what the trainee can do, not what he/she cannot do
- it includes social learning: the trainees should be given the possibility of dealing with their own social experience in order to enlarge their capability of action
- it includes integrated language instruction
- it uses target-group-oriented methodology and didactics, which show the trainees, holistically and in combination with practical achievement, the need to acquire expertise and specialised theory

Box 33 "Socio-pedagogically Oriented Vocational Training" **Germany**

The programme's *philosophy* - entitled "Social-pedagogically Oriented Vocational Training" - is based on wide and varied experience with in-plant training, youth-assistance projects, and community initiatives. It is that

- disadvantaged young people need not be labelled "not ready for training" but are capable of successfully completing training if they receive suitable assistance
- vocational training is not to be understood as a merely manual and cognitive learning process, but also as personal development that prepares for an adult role in society. The young person's abilities should be strengthened through a holistic approach to learning/teaching
- this approach should enable the young person to experience feelings of success and thereby gain in confidence in themselves and their capabilities

Thus, in vocational training:

- theoretical, practical and social learning must be purposefully combined
- identity-forming methods must be used eg projects and problem-solving
- products must be generated, which are useful and of value on the market

Since it was introduced in 1982, TSA has grown enormously, becoming the dominant instrument of assistance under Para 40c of the Employment Promotion Law: 4,900 young people were registered under it in 1984/85 and this had risen to 53,500 in 1993. Not so many of these were in the new *Länder* - about 5,000 in 1993 - because of the shortage of training places

The strengths of TSA, and tasks for its future development, were revealed in a recent study by the *Bundesanstalt für Arbeit*, see Box 34

"Non-plant Initial Vocational Training"

This is full initial training, leading to a recognised qualification, for disadvantaged persons in non-plant institutions.

In 1977-78, 20,000 young people in the old *Länder* were receiving non-plant full-training; now about 15,000 do (9,000 male and 6,000 female). When unemployment was low in the late 1980s, more young people were receiving TSA and fewer non-plant training. The entry of the 5 new *Länder* meant that the latter again increased a lot: but most were "market-disadvantaged" (over 36,000) and only about 5,500 were in the original target group of disadvantaged young people. In 1993/94, access to the scheme by the "market-disadvantaged" was ended, and 10,000 non-plant training places were provided under "Joint Initiative Upswing East", co-financed by the European Social Fund. As the in-plant training-place deficit continues in the east, the Initiative seem likely to be needed for some time yet, perhaps on an even larger scale - and perhaps more in the west too, as apprenticeship places dwindle again in the economic recession

Many aspects of the social-pedagogical approach to training (Box 33 above) have found their way into other fields of vocational training eg work with long-term unemployed adults, and the newly regulated metal, electrical, retail and office vocations. Increased teaching of key skills makes new demands on firms and vocational schools. If the approach were further used by them, it could increase the success rates in initial vocational training. And there is still room for improvement, see Box 35 below

Box 34 TSA appraised **Germany**

A survey in 1990 showed up the many strengths of TSA and the scope for its development:

- TSA provides a decisive contribution to the success of vocational training. It helps prevent drop-out, gives support in choice of vocation, or in correcting wrong career choices, and also helps disadvantaged young people not to forgo regular vocational training

- TSA is increasingly accepted by firms as a means of imparting know-how and ensuring a flow of junior skilled workers

- TSA motivates its participants, even getting them to spend a major part of their leisure time on their training

- TSA caters particularly for those who have had school problems, entering "newly regulated vocations"; since 1991, 84% of TSA-supported young people only had a lower secondary school diploma

- TSA might work better still by earlier intervention with those young people who only hold lower secondary school diplomas. There might be a case for making them an additional target group. Trainees often come to TSA for help in the last year of their training, to catch up on their theoretical subjects. This applies especially to those training in the newly-regulated vocations

- TSA is quite often needed by the trainee because of shortcomings in the firm providing the training. It often takes the form of assistance to the vocational school because it tends to concentrate on school instruction, on problems with grades, classwork and schoolwork. But trainees' learning difficulties or theoretical deficits often result from not being able to connect what they do at the firm with what they have learnt at school

- TSA should include a stronger element of practical work since disadvantaged young people learn better when theory is combined with practical work; this could mean either more intensive cooperation with the firm or with non-plant vocational training

- TSA suffers from the distinction between vocational *preparation*, vocational *training*, and *TSA*; a measure overlapping all three and using the pedagogic approach of TSA would help TSA avoid being seen as an additional measure

- TSA suffers because most TSA teachers, who generally are "only" lower-secondary school teachers and have had to acquire their vocational qualifications in the course of their teaching experience, feel inferior to most vocational school teachers

- TSA would be more effective if trainees were supported also in the first stages of employment, and if TSA provided them with "qualification counselling" to help the young people gain additional qualifications

Linking training and employment

Besides the big "Assistance to the Disadvantaged" programme described above, many local and regional measure exist in **Germany** for the support of the training of disadvantaged people, often supported by the *Länder*. Some of these are based on the approach of linking training with employment, often aimed at young adults (ie 18-25) who are unemployed and unqualified. The programmes may offer a range of temporary employment, vocational orientation, and be designed to lead on to a recognised vocational training. They may embody measures such as

Box 35 Ways to improve the "Assistance to the Disadvantaged" programme **Germany**

Aspects of the approach which require further improvement are:

- earlier vocational counselling is needed: the various current measures and assistance for commencement of vocational training are so many that it is difficult for clients to understand them all
- entrance requirements need to be made more flexible
- girls are under-represented: only 1 in 3 in the "old" *Länder* - they have too few recognised vocations to choose from
- some target sub-groups are missed out: eg 80% of all Turkish girls without secondary school diploma are unqualified; new ways of reaching eg homeless persons are needed; and drop-outs from regular training, who have increased from 15% to 20% in the past 10 years
- more flexible organisation of non-plant training: the gap between the educational and social background of the trainees and the requirements of the training is continuously widening: the young people can pass if they get enough help; a longer training period is one answer
- more support networks would help; non-plant training facilities need to be backed up by all the authorities and agencies relevant to the young person's development, to help them cope with their problems with family, money, accommodation, drugs etc
- regionally, attention needs to be paid so that young people are not trained into trades for which demand is declining, or those with no future
- the integration of the vocational school into the approach still leaves much to be desired
- first employment/apprenticeship is often short-lived, mainly due to social problems
- although a standard in-service training was developed for the staff concerned, more is needed now that the programme has grown and changed
- non-plant training centres need better internal management

- individualised employment and training plans
- learning by doing through practical work experience in companies
- support of practical learning by the teaching institution
- participating in selected course modules in the training institution
- the possibility of sitting for an "external trade test" in a recognised trade

It is clear, simply from this review of the German programme, that the personal support and guidance of young people liable to give up on their course and drop out is a crucial ingredient of provision in vocational training school/college

From as long ago as 1977, **Denmark** has offered two forms of pupil support through intensified guidance in technical and commercial schools:

- guidance is offered to all trainees; the guidance officers, who are part-time teachers, provide support to the trainees in school periods, and help them handle personal, social, economic, family-related problems which may impede the trainees' progress.This has been re-emphasised as part of the "Education for all" action plan

- trainees in these schools with special needs have a right to special facilities: extra time in specific subjects, professional support in homework or certain aids and appliances to compensate for learning difficulties or physical handicaps

Measures to reinforce guidance designed to encourage young people to continue in education and training may include special forms of certification:

In **Sweden** some pupils come out of upper secondary studies with "incomplete certificates" or X grades (ie the school has assessed the student as not possessing the knowledge or skills expected from the course). The proportion is low, at a little over 1% each year, over the 5 years 1998/89 - 1992/93. Regional differences were again considerable: one municipality had a rate of 17.6%, others had none

Additional help for immigrant students

In **Luxemburg**, in 1991, 40 new measures were announced to help immigrant children in school. Among those that have so far been implemented are
- setting up reception classes in secondary technical schools
- setting up some francophone streams in technical training, though only at the lower levels
- starting to provide some technical training modules, in both French and German

Two-stage qualification

An intermediate qualification (CITP) is also being introduced in **Luxemburg** which can be taken after 2 years whereas the normal qualification (CATP) is taken after 4 years. It will possible to take all the 4 years on a modular basis

3 *EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ALTERNANCE*

Alternance-type training has gained wide recognition as the best way to implement a mixture of theoretical and practical training. A number of reports refer to measures to extend alternance training into new fields, or to lengthen courses already based on it, typically from 2 to 3 years. Finding additional, or longer, training places, in a recession, has presented serious problems. Solutions have included

- reducing the in-plant training requirement
- running campaigns to persuade firms to offer more
- offering/increasing grants to them to do so
- introducing non-plant training.

In **Denmark** there has for many years been a shortage of places, and recently the government launched a campaign, supervised by a tripartite committee, and a new system of grants to encourage firms to take on more trainees. 3,500 more places were produced as a result

The **Swedish** reform states that, in nearly all the national programmes, workplace training (APU), where vocational subjects are taught, must occupy at least 15% of the total teaching time. This enables training to be given on machines which the schools cannot afford. It also gives pupils contact with firms who may want to employ them. There have been a shortage of places for APU, because of the labour market situation and because of financial disagreements over how much firms should be paid for providing them

The **Finnish** report notes that "the leading trend is to strengthen contacts betwen educational institutions and working life, ...and the tendency is to extend the time spent on practical work"

In the **Netherlands** cooperative arrangements between upper secondary vocational training (mbo) schools and firms have increased: all initial training courses have one or more work experience placements as part of their curriculum; schools have the right to decide on the overall number of weeks and their distribution over the years of training. 4 out of 10 mbo colleges invite staff of firms to give guest lessons. 30% of them have work placements for their teachers, and in some regions these count towards promotion. Contract activities are carried out by 1/4 of the colleges. Only 1/5 take part in joint curriculum activities

In **Belgium (Flanders)** "sandwich" (ie alternance) projects as part of part-time vocational secondary education have been successful in helping young people find suitable and higher quality work. In **Belgium (Wallonie)** in 1993 a Charter on Alternance Training was signed between the Minister of Education and the Wallon *Union des entreprises*, defining the respective roles of firms and schools. There were 3,500 students in alternance training in 1992-93 compared with 250 10 years ago

While alternance training has many strengths, it has two vulnerable areas: it needs good cooperation between those responsible for the training in the firm and in the school; and it depends on there being an adequate supply of good, or at least acceptable, training places.

The main references in the reports on steps to try to improve its effectiveness, are those described above, in Germany.

German experience is not all positive:

The **Germany** the Standing Conference of Ministers of Culture has been stressing since 1991 the "urgent need for better cooperation in company-based practical training and related learning in the vocational part-time schools. Because trainees with poor educational or personal preparation fail - in most cases - in the schooling part of dual-type training, the conference has pressed the vocational schools to assist...them with all the means at their disposal, including flexible measures, tailored to the capabilities and potential of the target group"

In 1993, the *Land* of **Northrhine-Westfalia** and the regional Labour Adminstration agreed on joint guidelines to improve such cooperation on behalf of disadvantaged young people

Finding more in-firm training placements

In 1990, a scheme was introduced in **Denmark** to allow school-based training placements to be substituted for in-firm placements, in view of the continuing shortage. But it was ineffective, less than 50% of those in need of a training placement taking advantage of it

In 1992, subsidies were introduced to encourage firms to provide more places to meet the demand for training placements, the supply of which has not been sufficient throughout the 1980s and 90s. It will last up to 1995, financed from contributions from public and private employers on a pay-roll tax basis

Placements abroad are seen as another way to bridge this gap: in 1991 a scheme was approved whereby trainees could fulfil their training placement obligations by work in a firm abroad in an EU or EFTA country

These measures were backed up in 1993 by a campaign run by the Ministry of Education, the social partners and local authorities as part of the "Education for All "Action Plan; together they have succeeded in bringing the number of placements back up to the level reached in 1987

Luxemburg's 1990 reform introduced alternance for vocational courses, and established a national coordinating committee, including all the social partners, to ensure such collaboration was effective

15% alternance

In **Spain**, Law 10/94 provides for Apprenticeship Contracts, replacing Work-Training contracts, increasing the eligible age limit up to 25 while reducing the proportion of time required to be spent in training to 15% (cf Sweden above)

The new contracts were seen by the trade unions as a form of deregulation and were one of the causes of the general strike last January. They will probably replace the Training Contracts, under which the Workshop-schools have hitherto been assisting about 30,000 young people a year; they are aimed at young people with considerable education deficits and difficulty in entering the labour market

In the first 5 months of 1994, it appears that 100,000 young people were engaged under these new contracts. Many of these had completed compulsory education, and have therefore displaced less well qualified young people who were being assisted under the previous version of this type of programme

The successful implementation of the contracts will however require a considerable effort on the part of firms since, unlike the Training Contracts, they are to be alternance-based

Many other smaller-scale projects and initiatives at local level reflecting closer relationship between training system and industry have been set up to help the transition of young people into the labour market. The majority have been initiated by local Mayors and the Vocational Training Centres

"Nouvelles Qualifications"

Probably the most radical criticism of the methods and effectiveness of alternance learning was the *Nouvelles Qualifications* experiment launched in **France** in 1983, and extended nationwide in 1989.

The approach is set out in some detail in Annex 5. It shares some characteristics with that of ***Insertion par l'Economique*** **- Assisted Employment-** (see chapter 4 above)

- immediate immersion in a working environment as the basis for learning

- acceptance of the possibility that completely unqualified young people can be given skilled jobs in the production process

- providing the opportunity to experience a real working environment

- learning, through experience of working, the functional skills and the know-how needed for work

Nouvelles Qualifications is the only experiment reported which fundamentally challenges the concepts and practice of alternance training, not only on the grounds of its inadequacy for meeting the needs of unqualified young people but also because it accuses employers of requiring an unnecessary high level of qualifications in those that they recruit. It is relevant to attempts to improve alternance and to break down the strong tendency in initial training to separate, or at least to fail to coordinate effectively, the two learning contexts, in the firm and in the school.

It is not only the teaching/learning process which is put under scrutiny: the world of the firm is too, for its inability to take in and train young people well, and for the need to reexamine the way work is organised and the specific skills needed for individual jobs.

The experience of the ***Nouvelles Qualifications*** initiative is clearly relevant to the aims of this study, if only because of its success rate with unqualified young people. It shares with other experiments and developments reported here a belief in the value of production-based learning as the most effective way to enable some young people to discover what they need to learn and to motivate them to engage or reengage in learning.

4 RAISING THE STATUS OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING

We have seen earlier how technical-vocational courses and careers are dogged by negative associations. Action to try to influence young people more favourably towards technical and vocational branches has been examined in the **Netherlands**

The **Dutch** study referred to on page 29 pointed out that, if policy-makers want to change the balance between general and technical-vocational entrance in post-compulsory education and training, they need to know what considerations are taken into account by young people in deciding between them

The study says that, to be regarded as "equals" or of equal esteem, options must offer similar "rewards" at the end, and that both routes to achieving them should be equally attractive. This would mean general education and vocational training offering the same

- opportunities for progression to higher education
- probability of finding employment once the course was finished
- short and long term prospects regarding financial income

As regards the way to acquire one or other of the qualifications, the following conditions are also important

- the attractiveness of the learning/training environment
- the opinions of significant others, eg parents, guidance counsellors and friends

And choices are also influenced by other conditions such as

- the cognitive and social capacities of the student
- the commitment of the student to acquire a specific qualification
- the family background and gender of the student

The approach being used by the government is summarised in Box 36

Box 36 The search for Parity of Esteem **the Netherlands**

A connected strategy of measures to promote parity of esteem between general and vocational education and training in the Netherlands

- ensuring that both general and vocational education and training qualifications provide access to tertiary level provision
- delaying the final choice between general and vocational education and training for as long as possible
- informing parents, guidance counsellors and other "significant persons" about opportunities in the vocational training system
- informing young people better about the vocational education and training system and the long-term prospects it offers
- proposing to introduce financial incentives to enhance choice of technology courses

Chapter 6

Implications for the training/retraining of teachers/trainers

Introduction

The previous chapters should have left no doubt that much remains to be done before the quality of education offered to disadvantaged young people in compulsory education and initial vocational training is regarded as anywhere near satisfactory in most countries; even where much has been done to improve it, the scope for further development and improvement is still great.

It is equally clear and generally acknowledged that the changes needed are not just matters of changing the law, or of reorganising schools, or even of rewriting the curriculum. Important and necessary as these may often be, they do not of themselves result in much qualitative change unless a further step is taken: action to assist the teachers and trainers to develop their professional skills.

The variety of teachers and trainers who are in contact with the young person in the course of his/her compulsory education and initial vocational training is considerable. We should first consider the pre-service training they may have received, before turning to the more specific training which they may (or may not) receive to help them deal with young people in difficulty.

1 THE BACKGROUND: PRE-SERVICE TRAINING

It would perhaps have been instructive for this study to have asked the unaskable question, namely how many teachers in our compulsory schools have never received any training in the processes of teaching, to any kind or level of pupil. The prospect is not bright for many new teachers today, in this respect. As one report put it - and this related to the present not the past - many new teachers feel under-prepared for what they have to do: they ask

> *"how they are expected to teach disadvantaged youngsters when they know that at the start of their career they are more likely to have to teach in schools in difficult parts of the country which the more senior members of their profession have quit in favour of schools in sought-after areas"*

In other words, the starting-point here should probably not be an assumption that all teachers have been well prepared to teach, and that all that is needed, in the context of this study, is some topping-up to cope with the disadvantaged or difficult pupil. The background of many

teachers in compulsory school is that of university or similar study in their own (often single) subject, and in a not inconsiderable number of cases, this will have been without any pedagogic training. The longer their subject training, it could be argued, the less the teacher is likely to be fitted to teach any but the academically-inclined pupil.

Paradoxically, the training or career background of teachers who relate well to "difficult" pupils is undefined, at least in the reports for this study. No doubt it presents difficulty. But such an analysis might be thought of the highest value for the successful development of the kind of provision needed

> Closer links between teacher training institutes and schools, and more attention in training to the social aspects of the teacher's role including guidance, were advocated by a report on professional problems in secondary schools in the **Netherlands** triggered off by new social pressures on the schools, eg early school leaving, youth unemployment and juvenile delinquency. Some of the recommendations are being implemented, though training remains mainly subject-related, and most teacher training staff have an academic background, with little experience of the "world of work" or that of disadvantaged pupils and their problems

> In 1989 the IUFMs (Teacher Training Institutes) were set up in **France** as a response to the unprecedented challenges faced by the schools, especially the *collèges* in the preceding period. Argument continues about how teachers can be trained to handle the full diversity of pupils without the training detracting from their scientific studies ie their subject. Teaching all levels of future teacher together (primary alongside secondary), a means of developing a more rounded and coherent professional view of schooling, is limited to 10% of course time. The fear among opponents of more attention to pedagogic issues is that teachers will become more like social workers than teachers

> Discussions have been held in **Belgium (Flanders)** about reforming the teacher training system. One proposal is to train teachers for the first stage of secondary school who can teach several subjects, and generally to recognise the uniqueness of secondary general education. Another proposal is to offer part-time teacher training to those who have already trained in another field of study, in order to widen the professional background of teachers in schools

The extent to which teachers are now being recruited, who have already worked in a non-educational part of the economy ie in industry or commerce, before entering teaching, is not recorded in the reports, though it is of course a requirement in some countries for teachers of vocational subjects in vocational schools (see below on Germany and Denmark). Such a trend would probably be helpful to redress the over-emphasis on loyalty to one's academic subject ("scientific studies") which often seems to operate against the introduction of new teaching methods as a means of raising the quality of compulsory education.

In the ***vocational schools*** there are usually three types of teacher:

- general subject teachers
- vocational subject teachers
- workshop teachers

Higher education is valued here too, giving additional status and salary advantages to teachers of general subjects. Why they should be so preferentially valued is not evident.

Teachers of vocational subjects are usually required to have had substantial previous experience in industry/business. But those who have gone through anything like the type of training required in Germany, Austria or Denmark must be the exception

> The training of vocational subject teachers for vocational schools in **Germany** is long and broad, and may include special attention to teaching disadvantaged young people. Teachers have a two-part training: 4 years at university, and 18 months induction in a school with further studies. The university course is divided as to 50% on vocational specialisation, 25% on educational science, and 25% on an optional programme (sport, languages, social sciences etc)

> In **Austria**, teachers/instructors of practical matters in the workshops must have a master craftsman examination and 6 years' experience. 2 years' pre-service training is also required (for all teachers in vocational schools). This training is being made more flexible and the first part may be taken part-time

> In **Denmark** vocational subject teachers must have had at least 5 years' experience, and general subject teachers 2 years'. Within the first 2 years they must then go through basic pedagogic training, organised as modular training on an alternance basis, ie theoretical modules and training in practical teaching skills at the participant's own school, where the training is managed by "Practice Trainers", key staff members who have been trained and qualified for this responsibility

And that is not all:

> In addition in **Germany** special programmes at 11 universities focus on disadvantaged or handicapped target groups, some integrated with the compulsory study programmes and others additional to it. Some of these emphasise "social pedagogics", derived from the training of social workers; and others, training the handicapped

The recent reforms in **Sweden** are provoking a new look at the training requirements

> Because of the changes in the role of the vocational teacher, in upper secondary school, a national Committee in **Sweden** was due to report on the competences required by teachers of vocational subjects, and how such skills should be achieved, in August 1994

To become an ***in-firm trainer*** does not usually require any training:

> No formal teacher qualifications are required for trainers in **Norway** and employers have no legal obligation to provide upgrading courses for their training personnel as part of Reform 94 even though they are included in the target group for them (see below on its upgrading courses, Box 37)

But countries with extensive apprenticeship training systems are different here. In **Austria**, for example

> 5 years of subject-related practical experience or a vocational qualification and 2 years' practical experience, is required for in-firm instructors. They are also tested on their ability to assess apprentices' development potential and their ability to promote their learning. 9,000 people have taken the examination since 1978; 91% of the 4,684 entrants in 1991 passed

> Preparation for the examination, and further training of instructors, are the responsibility of Institutes for Economic Promotion (WIFIs) of the chambers of commerce and the training institutes of the trade unions

The impact of pre-service training is, however, very long-term. Moreover, at present, the rate of turnover of teachers, in most countries, is low. The reasons are demographic: as the **Irish** report pointed out,

"by the year 2000, the majority of teachers will be 25 years out of training. Much has changed in the interval."

To raise professional standards in schools, therefore, the emphasis in most countries has to be on in-service training. For this to be successful, certain frame factors have to be fulfilled:

- a **strategy** for retraining, including a legal basis and a budget, which together provide a financial incentive to teachers to take part, whether by improving their prospects for promotion or by advance to a higher point on their salary scale

- a system for deciding **the content of the training**, eg based on the needs of the schools and firms, but drawing on the expertise of educators and the social partners, and ideally forming part of the development of the curriculum in the school

- training must be provided for the **technical subject** teachers, trainers, and instructors in vocational schools and in-firm trainers.

2 TEACHERS' IN-SERVICE TRAINING: STRATEGY

Most reports did not go into the legal aspects in detail, but as an example of the difficulties in at least some countries, it is worth noting that in **Luxemburg** the legal basis for in-service training of teachers in primary schools, who are generally non-graduates, is ahead of those for teachers in secondary schools, who are graduates. The assumption that university-trained teachers can look after their own further training needs, without their being related to those of the school as a whole, is however increasingly seen to be outdated, as the issues with which this report is concerned have grown.

Indeed, there is clearly a trend towards a new type of strategy, whereby in-service training is locally determined and locally provided, ie based on a school's needs which may in some cases be defined as part of its ongoing "school plan". The training is then supplied by a contracting institute according to a specification agreed with the school, and paid for from its budget, devolved to it from the state.

Such an approach can be seen, for instance, in the **UK**, **Denmark**, and the **Netherlands**; and both Communities in **Belgium** and **Luxemburg** are now adopting it.

Decentralisation enables the content of in-service training to be more closely related to the actual needs of the recipients:

> In-service training is now marketed in the **Netherlands**: school-based, contracted, training, of all, or groups, of a school's staff, has replaced traditional institute-based courses, thereby bringing the content of training closer to the school's realities
>
> In-service training has become an important instrument of educational change. Assistance with the teacher's guidance role features strongly in the new programmes which cover, for example
>
> - pupil guidance
> - counselling

- special care
- support for ethnic minorities
- reducing gender-related barriers in school
- remedial teaching and diagnostics
- methods of effective and pupil-oriented teaching
- teaching skills to stimulate independent learning and adequate professional attitudes with pupils

The skills required by the in-service training providers have changed accordingly. They need skills in the implementation of new approaches which convince teachers and are feasible in practice. They must be able to transfer a variety of reaching and guidance skills to teams and individual teachers

Norway has a national Action Plan for the planning, design, and delivery of upgrading courses for teachers, guidance personnel (who are normally also teachers and are not treated differently) and trainers. The aim is to ensure that the principles of the general curriculum plan will be pursued in class-room teaching and learning practices

Box 37 Courses for teachers and trainers together in Reform 94 **Norway**

The National Action Plan training programme consists of **modular courses** to create a common understanding of the justification and rationale of the reform

Part is intended for **teachers and trainers** together, on the background and contents of the Reform. Other parts are for **teachers of the new foundation courses**, and cover the new curriculum plans, the concept of knowledge, the integration of theoretical and practical knowledge, curriculum plans and learning objectives, teaching methods, learning processes, and assessment practices. Another part, with similar content, is for **trainers**

The Action Plan will be run in 3 stages

- general and subject specific upgrading courses
- aimed at teachers at Advanced Level I, and including upgrading in special education methods and teaching methods for immigrants and refugees
- for upgrading courses for in-company trainers and teachers who teach advanced level II courses. This must be arranged so that trainers from small and medium companies may take part, and the use of distance learning has been suggested

The strategy of setting up local "Competence Centres" is used in **Norway** as a way of building on the expertise of the now-closed special education schools, and providing leadership and support for school-based development and training

The means of stimulating or supporting such grass-roots activity may vary: they include decentralisation, curriculum liberalisation, or the creation of new local structures such as teachers centres:

In **Portugal**, a network of 200 local Teacher Training Centres have been set up to

- help teachers define their training needs
- stimulate awareness of the importance of in-service training
- involve the social partners, parents and cultural/community groups in training activities
- facilitate cooperation between schools at different levels

In **Belgium (Flanders)**, treatment of cross-subject themes such as the role of assessment or behaviour problems is becoming easier as the extent of school-or team-based training at local level increases

In the **UK** a Further Education Development Agency is being set up combining the curriculum development and staff development roles of two previously separate bodies. It is proposed that it concentrate on institutional performance, by undertaking curriculum research, running management development programmes, providing consultancy services and disseminating information

In **Ireland** a special unit to deal with in-service training has recently been established in the Department of Education

However, central provision of in-service training, through national or regional institutes and national inspectorates, continues

Many different ways of providing training are in use in **Spain**, in an intense period of retraining. which the LOGSE (see above, on the 1990 Reform) defines as "a right and an obligation for the whole teaching force". A vast network, and considerable resources, have been deployed by the Ministry of Education and Science in Madrid in the past few years, as part of a 6-year programme (1989-95), and similar plans are being implemented by the Autonomous Communities. Over 150,000 teachers have taken part in the centrally-administered territories alone, including over 1,000 teachers of remedial education

In **Austria**, attendance is compulsory at the annual meeting of all guidance officers, for further training. In-firm instructors have a wide variety of training opportunities: seminars and courses for the exchange of information and experience among instructors and instructors' leaders in regional and partly branch-specific working groups organised by sections of the chambers of commerce and other national industrial/ economic associations

Each year in **Ireland** a separate programme of inservice training is set up for teachers of the Vocational Preparation and Training Courses (VPT) - see above in chapter 3. They aim especially at improving teachers' skills in the area of teaching communications and language, as well as vocational subjects and general pedagogical skills. They are run by Inspectors and teacher trainers jointly

Some use the "snowball" or "cascade" system::

In the "new" *Länder* in **Germany**, Education and Labour ministries (in Brandenburg) jointly sponsor the Brandenburg Teacher Training Institute (PLIB) seminars for vocational school staff. The *Land* Ministry of Culture is sponsoring a pilot training project run by the *Land* Institute for School and Education (LISA) in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern involving part-time training, on a snowball system covering all the *Land* vocational schools in 3 years

Associating training with school-based curriculum development has many advantages:

In the case of the **Danish** plan "Education for all", the implementation of the 1990 reforms of upper secondary school involve the schools actively in local curriculum development related to the aims of the Reform and this is seen as the best way of effecting changes in attitude and practices in the school

3 THE CONTENT OF TEACHER TRAINING

We can distinguish two types of training here that are relevant to the study:

- training aimed at changing the curriculum and teaching methods towards "success-based" learning. Within this, there may be training designed expressly to enable teachers to be able to teach "the full range and diversity" of young people

- training expressly designed to help teachers teach young people with learning difficulties (but not those deemed to need "special education")

3a General

The gradual introduction of "success-based" teaching (*pédagogie de la réussite*) into both compulsory schools and vocational schools, with its emphasis on more individualised learning, is of central importance to many of the changes in compulsory education outlined in chapter 3. Getting schools and teachers to change to it, - ie implementing such reforms through in-service training - has become an urgent task:

> A 1990-94 development programme was mounted by the Ministry of Education in **Denmark** to support the Vocational Education reform to "up-qualify" vocational schools and their teachers to meet the demands of the new legislation. The components are set out in Box 38
>
> A similar approach has been adopted in **Norway** for the implementation of Reform 94: a national Project "Opportunities for all" is designed to promote staff development in special education for all teachers in upper secondary education. It offers an accredited course which is
>
> - school-based, in the sense that schools are encouraged to send several staff members on the same course
>
> - practice-oriented ie examination assignments are related to practical tasks and problems in the home schools of the participants
>
> - modular, on each on 4 themes: pupil, teacher and school; formal and informal cooperation and how to develop individual curriculum plans ; functional impairments in a social perspective; special difficulties that hinder learning and development
>
> The "Opportunities for all" course has so far been run on a trial basis but will play an important part in staff development as part of the implementation of Reform 94

3b Targeted

Some countries do not provide anything specifically targeted at teaching disadvantaged pupils:

> In the **UK**, for example, provision for "training the teachers or trainers of the disadvantaged" forms part of general (budgetary) provision for new training initiatives related to the major policy thrusts to change modes of institutional management and to bring schools and colleges closer to the world of work...Such measures are not separately recorded.

In others, some provision is made, though on a fairly small scale

Box 38 Implementation strategy for the 1990 Reform **Denmark**

- **Information meetings** for all employees to communicate the new principles to all categories of personnel in the school

- **Teacher courses** for selected teachers, lasting about 9 days, on 3 themes

  - managing decentralised education through management by objectives and including the local labour market

  - how to plan, carry through, and evaluate teaching which combines general and vocational subjects

  - how to adjust teaching to the qualifications and demands of different groups of participants

- **Decentralisation** of financial and educational control to the school headteachers

- **Advanced vocational pedagogic courses** for selected, specially qualified, teachers, so that every school had one highly qualified person able to start pedagogic development projects in the school. About 60 took part 1991-94. About 1 year of studies spread over 2 years, on 3 main themes:
  - learning processes and working life
  - the planning of education and teaching
  - vocational schools and their surrounding society

- **A special pedagogic development fund** was earmarked for curriculum development in commercial and technical schools, which they, Trade Committees, and curriculum developers could apply for, to develop new approaches and practices

- **Other themes**

  - use of "Training Enterprises" ie simulations in which the trainees are the employees; a strategy especially meant for trainees with difficulties in integrating into ordinary teaching at vocational schools

  - development of models of differentiated teaching and teachers' skills in handling groups of strongly assorted trainees: this is one of the central sets of problems since it is an "extremely great challenge to handle this assignment"

In **France**, such training is not a priority area, though it is provided in the context of some educational and *"insertion"* initiatives. Each IUFM has to have a contract to provide support services to the ZEPs in its area: this provides two-way benefits, both enriching the training of the IUFM from the experience on the ground in the ZEP, and vice versa. Each ZEP also has to have a training programme, emphasising

- diagnosis of pupils' learning difficulties
- adjusting standards of difficulty in different subjects, defining learning objectives
- developing different responses and remedial methods to fit individual needs
- exchange of ideas on innovatory practice and teaching methods

The DIJEN (see chapter 4) also has a training element: training is provided on a range of economic, social and training themes and issues related to assisting young people's *"insertion"*

Larger-scale targeted provision is made in **Germany**:

Teachers and trainers from non-plant training institutions are offered in-service training together, in the major programme of the **German** Federal Labour Administration

Since 1989, staff in the "Assistance to the Disadvantaged" programme have been offered further training for teaching disadvantaged groups through the Heidelberg Institute for Training and Work. These are oversubscribed, and are on a large scale: 5,800 staff from projects in the "old" *Länder* have been trained since 1989, and 5,900 from the "new" since 1990

Target groups are made up of

- staff from non-plant training institutions such as trainers, teachers, social-pedagogues, and management staff - sometimes the entire staff of a non-plant training institution together

- teachers involved in the TSA programme (see chapter 5)

Since unification, teachers in vocational schools and non-plant institutions in the "new" *Länder* are being required to cope with training young people for entirely new job requirements for which they were not trained themselves. The latter have been assimilated into the further training programme of the Federal Labour Office, but new modular courses have had to be developed by the Brandenburg Teacher Training Institute (PLIB) for the teaching staff in vocational schools working with the disadvantaged, including teachers and social workers/street workers involved in vocational preparatory courses

A variety of types of content are available

In-service courses are provided in two (*Land*-level) Teacher Training Institutes in **Germany**: on "Coaching Teachers" (about processes complementary to the teaching process itself), and on teaching disadvantaged groups. Some innovative work is now being done in the "new" *Länder* using module-based courses for theory- and workshop-teachers teaching disadvantaged or handicapped people.

The content of the **German** in-service training for TSA and non-plant training staff (see above) is based naturally on the concepts of the "Social-pedagogical oriented training in non-plant training institutions" - see Box 33 in chapter 5. The training is adapted to the needs of the projects concerned, and ranges from specific training methodologies to questions of staff development and motivation for the management of the non-plant institutions. Courses usually last 1 week; participants may attend several linked courses consecutively. A seminar on "Lively instruction" covered

- play-oriented and active learning
- introduction to memory training
- exercises to enhance "imagination"
- physical exercises (eg relaxation and concentration exercises) to improve learning

The PLIB seminars (see above) focus on certain thematic blocks

- how to enhance career planning and vocational training eligibility of disadvantaged young people
- how to develop learning/working motivation and foundation skills
- how to enhance the social competence and self-sustaining problem-solving capabilities of disadvantaged young people
- how to improve the integration of social learning and school-based learning

The LISA (see below) seminars cover

- motivating disadvantaged young people
- problem-oriented teaching and learning
- dealing with behaviour problems (learning refusal, absenteeism etc)
- communication and moderation techniques

A special focus of the **Danish** basic (or initial) pedagogic training is on trainees who have difficulties in relation to the training process eg those with immigrant or refugee backgrounds, trainees with learning difficulties or those with mental or physical handicaps. Teachers are taught how to understand and accept these groups and how to integrate them in the teaching process

Teaching "pupils intimidated by the learning process" and the teaching of immigrants are two of the five priority areas defined by the **Belgian (Flemish)** Coordination Committee on Continuing Training for 1993-95

Guidance is a special focus in some courses:

Training for educational counselling at upper secondary school level was regulated in **Austria** 1990, in a curriculum which covers assistance with pupils' learning difficulties, and a variety of other topics such as conflict management, improving (teachers') communication skills etc

Courses in guidance and social pedagogy have been provided since 1991 in **Norway** for teachers and guidance staff in lower and upper secondary schools

The role of a class "tutor" has been developed in **Luxemburg** as part of the introduction of the new "preparatory" section of technical and vocational training. Aspects developed have included

- school-family cooperation
- the conduct of meetings
- group dynamics

Visits to firms, and work experience, are arranged for guidance counsellors, - and also for class or subject teachers

"Most guidance counsellors in the **Netherlands** have never set foot in an enterprise, having been trained as teachers." Their professional association and other organisations have organised visits and short placements for them. Over 700 have taken part, each visiting 2 or 3 firms: 50% from havo/vwo schools; 15% from mavo; and 15% from vbo/mbo. The distribution suggests that, like their students, havo/vwo counsellors see these visits as a better way of experiencing the world of work than eg "job fairs"

Closing the gap between school and community is an important goal for some of the interventions we have seen in this report. "Community" may be interpreted in different ways, some putting more emphasis on the social dimension and others more on the economic, but all with the aim of effecting better integration of young people into the adult community, and stable employment

Making the school a more multi-service institution are the aims of the **Norwegian** Community Active School national development project set up in 1991. It is seen by some as supportive of the needs of low achievers even though the original aims are wider ranging. The project, for instance, covers all levels of education, and aims to integrate educational innovation with local and regional development initiatives, eg through establishing commercial enterprise as part of the curriculum. Courses for teachers in support of the Project are now run at departments of teacher training. A variety of people have been admitted as well as teachers: housewives, politicians and businessmen. The courses are designed to foster entrepreneurialism and the development of an active attitude to the possibilities of creating jobs rather than applying for them

4 TRAINING FOR VOCATIONAL SUBJECT TEACHERS, TRAINERS, AND INSTRUCTORS

"Trainers" or instructors may be offered training alongside teachers. Indeed in some of the examples already quoted, the whole staff of a vocational school (or non-plant training institution) are trained together. This reflects the model of whole-school training increasingly favoured at other levels of education.

Some separate specialised training is offered to trainers in some countries:

In 1990 a modular programme was set up in **Austria** to train *teachers and instructors* to teach

- vocational guidance and educational information in main general secondary school
- the compulsory subject "Occupational theory and practical vocational guidance" in the pre-vocational year as part of preparation for working life
- the organisation of, and assistance during, in-firm placements (work experience) and visits to firms etc

A parallel project in 1990-91 provided 1-year training for the first 18 vocational guidance specialists, to work as external counsellors and supervise the teaching of occupational guidance and vocational preparation in secondary schools

The content of courses for in-firm *instructors*, run by the WIFIs (see above) in **Austria** were reviewed by the social partners in 1994, and are to include

- the legal and educational base of the training course
- didactics/methodology/use of media, communication
- communication and conflict management, cooperation
- the basis of learning, social and behavioral psychology

In 1994, an initiative by the **Austrian** chambers of commerce led to the setting up of a *"Training Forum for Industry"*, a service institution for in-firm instructors, which will provide developmental and information services as well as developing links at international level especially with Eastern neighbour countries and the USA. The Forum sees itself as the natural platform for participation in initiatives at European level such as the LEONARDO programme through exchanges of instructors

The training of in-firm training supervisors, needed to implement the planned extension of in-plant training envisaged in the current **Swedish** vocational training reform, has been discussed in the Vocational Councils; a 7-day course was provided in the pilot scheme for the reform, arranged by the municipal authorities. No plans have been agreed yet for its general application, and it seems likely that the form of training will be considerably less than it was in the pilot scheme

In **Ireland** all new CERT (hotel and catering) *instructors* are required to take part in a comprehensive 3-week induction course which is followed by a probation period varying in length from 6 months to 2 years during which they are expected to observe practical and theoretical lessons, and their own schemes of work or lesson plans are closely supervised. They also work in industry for a period each year.

In **Greece**, courses in Careers Guidance are provided for trainers by the National Training Organisation (OAED)

In **Belgium (Flanders)** *teachers of practical subjects* may spend 2-8 months in a firm without loss of pay or status but schools often experience difficulty in finding substitutes

In the big **Spanish** programme, *vocational training teachers* have been given training in alternance methods

5 RESULTS AND PROBLEMS

Re-training is hard to evaluate, but the reports comment on various advantages and disadvantages of the new decentralised arrangements.

On the positive side,

> one of the reasons for the apparent success of the **Danish** teachers courses supporting the 1990 Reform was that the course was based on genuine educational issues formulated partly by the participating teachers themselves

> Experience so far indicates that the advanced pedagogic course provided in **Denmark** as a basis for initiating curriculum development on compulsory schools has been very influential in the development of the schools, including their ability to manage groups of trainees with difficulties. Local development projects financed from the Ministry's Fund, are seen as "far more efficient tools of implementation than traditionally organised continuing education, where teachers are taken away from the context of the problems of their own schools"

> Feedback from the **German** TSA-related seminars (see above), which are oversubscribed, shows that they are well received by the participants and reflect day-to-day problems in the workplace

> In the **UK** where colleges of further education are responsible for their own staff development, and are now independent institutions, spending 1% of the annual budget on staff development appears usual. In one college, "each full-time teacher received on average over 6 days of training, approximately 75% of which was provided internally. Staff development is well targeted and effective in spreading good practice between schools and courses" according to one inspection, though there is of course much variation

Decentralisation applies to budgeting as well as the definition of needs. Local authorities and schools themselves become responsible for deciding how much they can afford to spend on retraining:

> A distinction is made in **Norway** between "upgrading" courses (like the modules drawn up for Reform 94) for which no accreditation is available; and "further education courses" which imply gaining additional recognised qualifications. The counties are expected to find 50% of the funding of the Reform 94 upgrading courses

Decentralisation appears to result in under-provision when school budgets are under pressure. In-service training expenditures are as vulnerable as ever if they are not earmarked

> Decentralisation of finance to school level, and relating grants to student numbers has made for difficulties in **Denmark** on the funding of in-service training, since school themselves tend to cut back on it when they are pressed financially. The trade union (LO) argue that it should therefore be treated separately ie earmarked

Decentralisation, while helpful to developing school-based assessment of the school's training needs and those of its staff individually, is not likely in itself to be enough to ensure effective in-service training. Loyalties, eg to one's subject, may compete with training aimed at pupils' needs:

> A recent (1994) evaluation in the **UK** showed how the "inertia in school systems can work against the adoption of new whole school approaches, such as that relating to careers education and guidance". The extent is variable to which individual members of a school staff, by contrast with the management, have an overview of whole school policies. Their focus in recent years has been more likely to be on the

teaching of their main subject area and the changes to curriculum and assessment procedures required by the National Curriculum... There are still powerful forces of school academic culture and of competition between schools which are resistant to TEC influence to try to bring schools nearer to the world of work"

Similar difficulties are recorded in the exploitation of the scheme for Teacher Placements in Industry: in the schools, "the lack of training and development culture, poor systems of communication, and absence of action planning continue to be barriers for the widespread dissemination of the outcomes of placements"

Under-investment, in short, is a common problem

In **Ireland** a number of recent reports have identified critical in-service training needs. A report for the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (1992) recommended an increase in the amount of public funding as well as the need for national and local structures to plan and coordinate it

Chapter 7

Improving cooperation between providers of training

Introduction

One of the most marked general changes to come over the world of education and training in most countries in the last period has been its greater openness to working with other parts of society and the economy. "Opening up the school/college to the outside world" (and opening up the university too, though we are not concerned here with that aspect) has become a major theme in the evolution and improvement of education and training at all levels. A number of interesting and significant developments are highlighted in the reports.

They mainly concern four related but quite distinct areas:

1 governments involving the social partners in the ***development of policy on all aspects of vocational training, not just vocational curricula***, through national-level councils, and other subordinate structures/committees

2 efforts to ***"close the gap"*** between the world of the school and the world of industry (ie "the economy"), to strengthen the vocational curriculum and guidance role of the school, through "school-industry links" of many kinds; seen from industry's point of view, the task may seem more like that of helping schools be *more responsive* to the needs of the local or national economy

3 developing systems of ***post-school follow-up*** of all (or some) pupils, calling for *inter-service* cooperation between schools and other agencies in the local community. To this is closely connected the subsequent stage of

4 ensuring that ***training opportunities, and other services, are provided locally*** for young people, especially those in the target group, by cooperation between all providers.

The state of the art varies a lot in these areas. In general, most countries have arrangements for the first, and in the last 10 years many have set up arrangements for the second: the third is a persistent issue in many countries with a great variety of solutions to be seen in different countries, as we have seen already (page 75); the fourth is still in its infancy with only a few countries trying it.

1 NATIONAL STRATEGY

Governments increasingly recognise the need to involve the social partners in both the making of policy on training and in its provision, at all levels:

Germany's Dual System has generated a high degree of formal cooperative structures and activity

- at all **levels**: tripartite representation at *Federal* level in the Central Committee of the Federal Institute for Vocational Training (BIBB); similarly at *Länder* level, in Standing Committees for vocational training; at *regional* level, where the so-called "autonomous bodies" supervise the provision of vocational training on a legal basis; and at *company* level, where the Works Councils have rights of co-determination in the planning and implementation of vocational training and the employment of in-plant instructors

- in all **types** of training provision. The Dual System involves the company and the part-time vocational school. For Non-plant training and Training Secondary Assistance 4 bodies are involved: the institution providing the dual-type non-plant training, the vocational schools, companies asked to provide in-plant phases of work experience, and the Labour Administration contributing funds

In **Sweden** "Vocational Councils" (or programme councils) exist in 176 (62%) of the country's 286 municipalities to plan and foster cooperation in eg workplace training. Larger purchases of equipment such as numerically controlled machines are discussed and the schools receive advice about teaching by professionals outside the school

In **Italy**, a series of agreements have been signed between government and the social partners, dealing with new priorities in education and training including

- strengthening school-industry links
- better coordination in the supply of training
- reform of the system of finance of training
- planning of a programme for the training of trainers
- the creation of a National Council for Vocational Training

National-level tripartite forums for policy making and discussion can be seen in **Belgium, Greece, Spain** and **Portugal**. In **Spain**, the General Council for Vocational Training and the Economic and Social Council are the bodies at national level, while similar structures are being set up in the Autonomous Communities.

In **Portugal**, the relevant bodies are the Governing Council of the IEFP, responsible for Vocational Training Policy, and its standing committee on Certification; and on a broader front the Economic and Social Council, and the National Commission on Apprenticeship. Advising the Minister of Education there is a new National Education Council set up in 1987, and within the Ministry of Education itself the GETAP (Office for Vocational Training policy). A new Monitoring service has also been set up to help preventive policy-making in the employment and training fields

In **Belgium (Flanders)** an annual negotiation between the government and the social partners has resulted since 1989/90 in an inter-professional agreement whereby a percentage (0.30% in the last year, 1993/94) of the total wage bill is assigned for the re-assimilation of risk groups, 0.15% being reserved for the most vulnerable which includes young people in part-time compulsory education. The funds go to selected schemes eg alternance training, employment subsidies for the employment of unemployed young people etc

As the alternance approach to training spreads in Europe, the number of bodies required for this kind of cooperation, in order to provide linked training, increases also. There is evidence of an increasing realisation that not everything can be done at national level, and regional or even local solutions are needed in a field where, more and more, speed of response to changes in global markets are essential for survival. Hence the growth of regional or local structures of various kinds. The speed of development varies widely however.

The pressure to respond to high youth unemployment, and the need to get firms to take more responsibility for solving the problem, has also caused national governments to encourage regional or local bodies to be set up, which can come up with local solutions according to needs and resources.

Experience shows two main functions being performed:

- coordination of the content of training, and approaches to teaching it
- broader cooperation: local labour market "conferences" and "networks" bring together all the different parties concerned with training.

In **Belgium (Flanders)** the 1993 meeting of the States General was a crucial moment for the definition of the relationship between education and the labour market, especially for the reassessment of technical education

In **Germany** Joint Labour Conferences were begun in 1991 to discuss issues which went beyond the scope of single training providers. They were meant to be a forum for enhancing cooperation, and have led in some cases to the creation of "networks", which aim to help local training providers to respond to local changes in demand, improve the assimilation of young people into employment etc. See Box 39

Box 39 Local networks in support of training for the disadvantaged **Germany**

The idea of "Networking" the parties involved in ensuring training opportunities for the disadvantaged goes back in Germany to the early 1980s, because of the need to focus the responsibilities and efforts of many different parties: Federal, *Land*, regional, private etc

Early on, Round Tables were formed. Later, networks developed from them

The Public Youth Assistance Office generally took the lead in starting up networks. Since 1991 it has a coordinating role by law in the transition of young people betwen general school and initial vocational training

In **Sweden**, every municipality was required in the 1970s to set up a body to promote cooperation between school and the world of industry; these SSA councils are no longer obligatory and now only exist in 38% of areas

The **Dutch** government in its 1993 paper "A Well-prepared Start" (on young people's entry into vocational training and work) opted for "an integrated regional approach"
The instruments of **Dutch** policy include

- establishing agreements at national level with employers and trade unions (laid down for 1992-94 in the form of a covenant)
- encouraging agreements at regional level
- encouraging partnerships and joint activities by making project facilities available in each region and branch of industry

Box 40 Regional networks to reduce early school leaving **the Netherlands**

- a comprehensive registration system will cover all school leavers

- coordination of activities to recover early school leavers, with priority to the "core group", namely those lower secondary school pupils who drop out without qualifying

- network participants have to set down a set of agreements to make up a regional action programme eg on location of responsibility for registration, application procedures, programmes, training places, financing, and information exchange. The agreements include a quantitative target on reducing the number of early school leavers in the region, and specifying particularly numbers for the priority "core group"

- regional reports have to be submitted on results achieved and activities undertaken. On the basis of this information actors can evaluate, negotiate and redesign to achieve a more effective approach. A national report makes it possible for regional networks to compare their results with other regions and gives support for tracing successful activities

By offering funds on these conditions the government has encouraged the creation of regional networks as infrastructure. Local government is responsible for coordinating the setting up of the networks, the action programmes, reports of results, and registration systems; as well as stimulating network participation so as to make better use of existing and additional resources

Box 41 The AOB agencies **the Netherlands**

Tasks of the AOB agencies

- provide information about education, training and work
- monitor the intake and throughflow of young people in the education and training system
- organise training courses on topics like learning strategies, combatting drop-out, job application strategies
- administer psychological tests
- organise study workshops and conferences
- coordinate work experience placements for students and teachers
- set up job fairs
- carry out school leaver and labour market surveys
- help firms select job applicants

There are 17 AOB-Centres spread over the whole country

- increasing places for training in firms by offering subsidies for the supervision of trainees and bonuses for specific target groups

- encouraging the development of networks both among school,and other institutions, by granting additional funding on condition that cooperation is set up, and local municipalities play a coordinating role. See Box 40

17 AOB agencies now cover the country: they have amalgamated the tasks previously carried out by the Regional Organisation for the Apprenticeship System, the COAs, (Education-Employment Centres), and private guidance and counselling firms which many schools used to use. These Centres provide services to schools, firms and employment agencies. See Box 41

It is not only the pressure of world competition that has led to greater regionalisation or decentralisation. Countries without a tradition of community responsibility for ensuring that all young people are properly trained for a vocation, realise more and more the need to find ways of accustoming their firms to think more along those lines. Involving them, with some degree of government subsidy as encouragement, to work together with the education and training authorities locally, has been seen as one way of achieving this change of mind. Joint local or regional training councils are thus one means to bring about long-term cultural change, to convince management in firms that they cannot leave all responsibility for training, and its costs, to the government.

In the **UK**, starting in 1990, 82 local Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) were set up in England and Wales, and 22 similar bodies in Scotland, to coordinate the provision of vocational education and training in their areas, working in a wide variety of modes with other local bodies. They have particular powers to administer the Youth Training scheme and training for unemployed adults, but this is only part of their much wider role of influencing and catalysing developments

2 CLOSING THE GAP

These regional or local bodies may also have a role in creating or servicing school-industry linking activities. Firms' links with compulsory schools are mostly in a guidance context:

In the **Netherlands** this means firms helping in relation to

- the common core curriculum subject "Technology"
- the obligation for schools to provide careers advice to their students
- the new law which allows schools to organise work experience placement for students of compulsory school age

Like Germany has had since the 1950s, **Austria** has joint "working groups" bringing together the world of education/training and industry. There have also been successful 2-week teacher placements in firms, preceded by a 4-day seminar and a 2-day reflection meeting afterwards. Teachers, from compulsory education schools, felt their attitudes to eg apprenticeship training had undergone substantial positive change, as well as the importance they attached to their guidance role and the use of practical learning in school. Firms have also helped set up vocational guidance centres in the provinces which provide services to schools as well as information on careers to pupils

In the **UK**, the TECs are responsible for promoting and supporting Business Education Partnerships between firms and schools at all levels, including primary; these may support teaching in various subjects as well as providing the channel for work experience and visits to firms

Firms' links with vocational schools/colleges are generally related to alternance training, though new developments include an increasing amount of contract work:

In the **Netherlands** all large firms (ie with over 55 staff) have links with schools. The smaller the firm the less likely it is to have links. Therefore future growth will be in links with small and medium firms
In **Sweden**, Business Councils, reference groups and informal networks existed at the beginning of 1994 in 172 (60%) municipalities, promoting joint action of many kinds, such as fostering companies, business seminars, and conferences and helping contacts between firms and schools
"Adoption" experiments have been tried in **Denmark** which extend cooperation between vocational schools and companies and labour market organisations, eg linking a single group of pupils with a company, which may provide training lessons in the company, illustrating parts of the school curriculum by examples of the production of the company, the organisation of work, and the company's impact on local society

Box 42 Links with industry to raise the quality of vocational training **the Netherlands**

"Direct links between industry and vocational training colleges are regarded by the training authorities as one of the best means of improving the match betwen the vocational education and training system and firms

It is therefore to be expected that both joint curriculum development activities and contract activities will increase: the first as colleges have to adjust their courses more to regional demands and the second to enable them to earn more of their budgets"

Box 43 Helping industry to help itself? **the Netherlands**

The Ministry for Economic Affairs announced two programmes in 1993, designed to stimulate links between schools and industry

IMPULS: for sectoral cooperation

VRIJMARKT: for regional cooperation

Action plans can be 50% grant-aided, matching investment by industry, on the following themes:

- providing a clear picture of training requirements, both qualitative and quantitative, in each sector of industry
- stimulating the flow of young people especially girls into technical training
- improving the performance of vocational training ie a higher pass rates
- stimulating "a vocational training for all at least at NVQ level 2" to avoid shortages of skilled workers
- improving cooperation within the training infrastructure

In **Sweden** in the 1970s and 1980s **resource centres**, especially technology centres, were created in many municipalities for cooperation between the various suppliers of education and local trade and industry, providing large well-equipped premises with permanent staff, to permit training providers to share access to expensive machinery. In other areas one person acts as contact point for this purpose

3 *POST-SCHOOL FOLLOW-UP*

The diversity of approaches to the need for more rigorous and effective ways of finding and following up early school leavers has already been described (page 75 et seq). The partnership angle is especially emphasised in the new Dutch approach

The **Dutch** government has a policy to strengthen the local infrastructure and the role of local government in tracing and leading back early school leavers. Grants are being given to regions to stimulate network participation and activate more of the existing capacity and resources available for contacting, registering, counselling, and leading back all early school leavers in the region - not only those of compulsory age but also leavers who are no longer obliged by law to attend school

To attack the problem of schooling of young people of compulsory age, the law on compulsory education has been strengthened:

- to increase the powers of the local authorities who are obliged to cooperate with other authorities in the region, and to set up a contacting system
- with the possibility of punishment not only of the parents but also of the pupil
- to allow more alternative courses/programmes eg in-firm at a younger age
- to distinguish more clearly between the categories of full-time compulsory, part-time compulsory, and alternative compulsory; and between truancy and absence from school

4 LOCAL ACTION

The Missions Locales

The largest and most innovative action for the development of new or improved service and opportunities for young people at the local level has been the ***Missions Locales*** in **France**, (see Box 25 for a summary of their history). Jointly sponsored at national level by the Ministries for Work, Employment, and Vocational Training, and coordinated by a high-level Interministerial Office on Young People's Vocational and Social Integration, they are the only initiative of this kind to be explicitly embedded in the local political structure, being co-financed 50-50 by central government and the local authority (*commune*). "The mayor is also Chairman of the Steering Committee of the *Mission*, so that its staffing and operations are inevitably drawn into the world of the local municipality".

One of the unique features of the *Missions Locales* is their double function:

- to **help** young people directly
- to **develop** the quality and range of services available to them.

How well they have succeeded in the latter function may deserve closer study, but it is interesting that, having started with a mainly "social" brief and image, they have increasingly concerned themselves with issues which lie in the field of industry and employment:

- analysing employment markets; surveying firms' manpower requirements

- identifying employment niches; taking part in other experiments such as the *Nouvelles Qualifications, "Jeunes et technologie"*, and setting up *"entreprises d'insertion"* (see chapter 5) etc

- organising "Young people and employers" meetings; and supporting local economic development.

Some of this may suggest a rather considerable departure form their original, global, remit. It does however seem to indicate the need for more action at local level to make the "market" for the employment of young people, (and not just the disadvantaged), work better.

Other applications of "partnership"

Other ideas being used here include

- local ***curriculum development projects*** - see Box 44

Box 44 Local cooperation development projects to reduce drop-out **Denmark**

When the Minister for Education launched his "Education for All" action plan in 1990 a special Secretariat was established in the Ministry's Department of Vocational Education and Training, to help vocational schools reduce the drop-out rate. In 1993-4 a number of development projects have been set up in local areas, some of which involve increased cooperation locally

- increased staff resources and intensified teacher cooperation on the admittance of trainees
- decentralised guidance to involve other staff than educational and guidance staff in provision of guidance
- development of the form-teacher function giving one single teacher special responsibilities for cooperation and communication with the trainee's other teachers
- establishment of social and cultural arrangements outside teaching to create a better school culture and learning environment, promoting the trainee's incentive to continue education

- ***networks*** for the development of cooperation at local level between schools and firms to help the transition process, and similar initiatives for the exchange of teachers between compulsory schools and vocational training schools, to promote mutual knowledge between different educational environments - see eg Boxes 39 and 40

- ***diversified sponsorship*** eg in setting up new vocational training schools: the new Vocational Schools in **Portugal** are sponsored by a variety of bodies, private as well as public, and including trade unions and cultural cooperatives; it is a requirement that all proposals should have a partnership dimension ie associate different actors from the business/education worlds

- ***contracting and franchising***: the **UK** uses both. "Partnership" is steadily becoming the means by which all major local education and training decisions are taken: the TECs (local training councils) work with the local authorities, colleges, employers, and other training providers in their areas to develop a coordinated training strategy. They also purchase some training or, using government money, contract with providers to supply it. Training may also be bought from franchised providers eg where firms are very small, such as hairdressers or travel agents

- ***Business-Education Partnerships*** (BEPs) are developed by the **UK** TECs to promote collaboration between schools and firms at any level and in some cases on a very considerable scale: one BEP "has 700 businesses and all its local colleges and secondary schools on board. Not only does it try to raise the aspirations and motivation of young people and develop opportunities for them to attain qualifications: it also helps professional staff in schools to develop their skills and tries to win greater community and employer commitment to its work with young people"

Chapter 8

Themes for future cooperation

Introduction

In commissioning this study the Member States and the Commission have already registered their concern over the twin problems of young people's failure in compulsory school and vocational training, and the dangers of their subsequent marginalisation.
What then does the study suggest should be done, by them separately or together, to address and remedy the problems?

There is no single answer to the question of national action: some countries are much further ahead than others in reaching solutions; some are much more active in looking for them. The report offers those who are neither advanced nor as yet active a useful set of references or starting points for building up suitable policies.

The grounds for cooperative action at Community level are strong. The risks to the Community's well-being and prosperity, perhaps even to its stability, from large numbers of young people and adults not being socially integrated in any true sense, are immense. So are the social and economic costs of their support, on the fringes of society. "Cohesion", at the most basic level of sharing the benefits of wealthy societies equitably, requires the Community to support action to redress such marginalisation of a whole section of Europe's young people.

The report shows that the scope for useful cooperative action is not in doubt. Differences in system and culture, in this field as elsewhere in social policy, are no bar to the transfer of ideas and good practice. There is much further development work to be done on the new approaches that have been launched in many countries; some at least of this would be much enriched, and done more cost-effectively, if underpinned by cooperative action. Where innovation has advanced further, and good models are already being implemented, the Community should be active in disseminating them, for local adaptation and implementation.

A recurrent theme of the report has been "start early" if you want to develop effective measures to counteract deprivation or disadvantage. Consequently the list of themes which follows is by no means restricted to those that fall in the area of training. Many relate to

current policies and measures in education, and related services for young people. How they are combined with, or should complement, training policies, is a matter for national consideration, since much depends on the structural and cultural context.

The value of stated national targets is worth stressing, in this context. Policy targets, such as a percentage reduction in early school leaving in a medium-term period, such as 5 years, have been adopted in a number of countries. They have the advantage that they provide strategic goals towards which separate services can work, - education, youth, welfare, training and employment. The scope for collective action within the Community, as in the stated policy goal of the PETRA programme, is obvious: each country could adopt its own target, related to where it is now in terms of performance: but there would surely be all-round benefits, and a stronger incentive to action and collaborative action as well, if **all** the countries, not just some, had committed themselves to a medium-term target in this way.

In conclusion, then, a set of 14 themes, covering a wide range of policy fields, are offered as a basis for cooperative action within the framework of existing Community Initiatives supporting education, youth, training and employment policies.

Theme 1 Counteracting disadvantage before transfer to secondary school

There is a general consensus in favour of early intervention to counteract disadvantage before transfer to secondary school, through action as early as preschool and primary education. There are good grounds for believing that such action would be a sound investment, and more effective than trying to "repair" deficits later on in secondary school or later. The evidence from the USA's Headstart programme is positive on the lasting effects of positive discrimination at the pre-school stage. There is widespread assent in the reports to the idea that children likely to fail can be identified and should be offered more help at an early stage.

For immigrant children, the need for such intervention is of particular importance, given the gaps they have to fill in, especially in relation to language acquisition.

School- and area-based interventions, from as early as pre-school education, are in place in some countries, and appear successful. Criteria for identifying individual children who are at risk in the primary stage have been researched. There is extensive experience of using assessments at age 11 on transfer to secondary school to identify pupils likely to drop out. In short, there is plenty of experience with a variety of types of intervention, and grounds for confidence in their effectiveness.

A start could be made by organising at Community level a synoptic review of studies of costs and benefits, comparing different types of preventive action, as a supporting measure to national policies aimed at the reduction of failure in compulsory education. The review should cover the case for the diversion of resources into preventive action by transferring them away from "downstream" interventions such as the social and custodial care of young people.

Theme 2 Inclusiveness through "extended education" in compulsory schooling

A central problem for the Member States is what provision to make in compulsory school for the "hard core" of early school leavers ie those with emotional and behavioral problems. We have a number of "profiles" of some of the young people, and their likely background, in the reports.

The more disturbed or "difficult" the pupil, the more necessary it is that he/she be treated as a person, not just as a "slow learner" or an "under-achiever". The "learning difficulties" of children with social and emotional problems are not simply problems of cognition; the response offered to them has to be equally broad. Good schools seek to develop the whole person, not just the cognitive faculty. For no child is this more important than the disturbed or difficult boy or girl.

A good formulation is to be found in the Norwegian report, which proposes that schools should practise an "extended concept of education which implies both the transmission of knowledge and care for the whole person". Practices which reflect such a principle can be seen elsewhere in the reports (the Danish class teacher system; special tutoring), and are no doubt widely distributed in some, if not most, Member States. Their common feature is

probably that they offer the "difficult" pupil a stable and supportive relationship with a caring adult.

The aim under this heading should be to articulate, illustrate and promote the principle of "extended education" through the development of models of good practice and related guidelines for teacher training.

Theme 3 Developing appropriate general education for *all pupils*

There has been a tendency in the past for the response to the poorly-motivated and difficult pupil to be to offer a so-called "vocational" curriculum, or to allow him (generally him, not her) to divert ahead of his peers to starting an apprentice-type course ie to get started on learning a trade.

Two distortions have resulted: vocational training has got a bad name as the dumping ground for the rejected ones; and the pupil's personal difficulties are not addressed, so that even if prepared for a trade, he is ill-prepared for life.

Although this may be less common than it was, the idea that early transfer to a more-vocational curriculum is a good solution to the child's needs - because it is the only way to interest him and so much more suitable than the ordinary, book-based curriculum - is still with us. It needs to be challenged.

The experience of the socially and emotionally disturbed child is likely to have been impoverished and impoverishing. The compulsory school is the last organised chance for society to offer some compensation for this deprivation. Many schools do offer a great deal that is relevant. The deprived child needs more, not less, than the others.

Of course, this does not mean more book-based, theoretical, learning. All the reports make clear that reforms in compulsory education are moving us well away from any notion that is the beginning and end of good primary or secondary education.

Nor does it mean imposing a "superior" culture, which however excellent intrinsically is unrelated to the experience and reality of the pupil.

It means treating the themes and content of the given curriculum in ways which promote learning by such children, in the words of one of the reports, "with dignity and success". It is not a matter of additional lessons in "Preparation for parenthood" or "How to draw your social security benefit", sensible and relevant as these may be, as part of the compulsory school for all pupils. It is about finding ways of presenting the curriculum differently, sticking to the idea that education should be, for all, an opening of doors, not an instrumental process. The main difference from the regular curriculum should be the very positive one, that the disadvantaged child will need longer, and more varied, exposure to such education, if he/she is to benefit to the same degree as his/her peers. This is what adaptation, and extension, have to mean.

Examples of how curricula have been developed and are taught on these lines should be identified and exchanged as part of the promotion of good practice.

Theme 4 Strengthening young people's commitment to education and training

Many of the curriculum changes advocated in the compulsory school reforms address the need to offer some young people more evidence of the relevance and value of the curriculum to their present and future lives - in other words not to rely on the intrinsic value or attractiveness of learning but to make it more explicit.

Somewhere in the curriculum (eg in personal and social education) there must be a "subject" through which the young person is encouraged to develop his/her own identity and a relationship with his/her immediate society and the wider world beyond.

The processes of vocational guidance are intended to complement this by providing an early glimpse of the actual world of work, against which to formulate and test ideas of their own future in life - their first *projet de vie*. Many strands of current work in the schools are aimed directly or indirectly at this process: closing the gap between the worlds of school and work, setting up work experience, - in fact all the activities associated with *arbeitslehre*.

For all pupils the successful accomplishment of these two aspects of personal development is essential. It is clear that this is not achieved in many schools.

But for the early school leaver additional help is needed to strengthen their interest in continuing in education and training of some kind: action to explain more thoroughly to pupil and parent (perhaps also the local community) the disadvantages of not doing so; local action to relate job opportunities to individuals with training; and action perhaps through peer examples and tutors.

The prime mover will still normally be the school: it is still the proper focus for the development of the young person and his/her *projet de vie* in these last years of compulsory school. But there are many possible resource people to assist.

Good ways of doing this, so as to inform young people, and persuade them not to drop out, need to be more widely known and exchanged.

Theme 5 Improving professional skills for teaching in secondary education

The need to "define the character of secondary education" was how one report expressed the training deficit felt by many teachers in secondary schools. Their lack, in many instances, of pedagogic preparation for what has become an increasingly varied and difficult professional role is a pervasive theme in the reports. Even well-trained and experienced teachers have difficulty in handling the learning problems of pupils in secondary school whose attainment and motivation are very low. The reported success of centrally-supported but locally-organised curriculum development in meeting both these training needs and also the curriculum requirements of pupils is a helpful sign.

The report records the need for some schools to pay more attention to extending the type of education offered, so as to develop more the pastoral role of the teacher, and to invest more in personal and social education as compared with subject knowledge. The fear that teachers will become too like social workers if their training takes them in this direction needs to be noted. Examples of how a proper balance can be struck, to the advantage of all pupils, not just the underprivileged ones, ought to be examined internationally, and models generated and exchanged of how teachers professional training can be developed or adapted for this purpose.

At the same time consideration needs to be given to how the skills of teachers who are good at teaching poorly-motivated and low-achieving pupils can be recognised and rewarded in proportion to the value of these special skills. Pay scales, promotion systems, and school structures need to recognise this type of expertise just as much subject or scientific performance.

Here also experience should be shared on how schools, and employers, and teacher training authorities, addressing these issues and what solutions have been found.

Theme 6 Greater diversity of transition pathways

An important theme in the reports is that of increasing young people's readiness to enter vocational training after they have left compulsory education: this covers a variety of measures: preparatory courses in schools to help a young person improve his/her school-leaving certificate, and many kinds of "stepping stone" measures which enable those who have missed the main road to pick it up again.

The need for these measures arises partly because the young person has rejected the main road because of bad experiences earlier in his/her school life or because of some other personal or family disadvantage. But it also arises because the systems of training we have inherited are generally very narrow and strict on such aspects as the acceptable age, and the required qualifications, for entry.

New systems however are strongly characterised by relaxing as many as a possible of these restrictions. They try to reflect the fact that young people mature at different speeds, and that some only discover a *projet de vie* after they have left compulsory school.

The technical and vocational routes to vocational qualification have to ensure that dropping out for a year (or more) is not penalised, but recognised as part of the reality of the different speeds and states of readiness of young people to start the next stage of learning.

Such "detours" will probably be taken by a great variety of young people once the possibility of doing so exists. Not all will be disadvantaged, at least in any usual sense. But the flexibility will be of additional help to those who now do not proceed straight down the main road into initial training and have to find stepping stones to get back on to it. In the new systems these stepping stone alternative routes will become part of the main system of more diverse pathways.

Models of these comprehensive pathways could usefully be compared so as to be able to incorporate the best elements of each.

Theme 7 Partial credits for partial courses

In vocational training there is already much use of modularisation, which allows greater flexibility, motivates better, and facilitates more frequent assessment and feedback to the student. In compulsory education too, modules are starting to be used because these benefits are equally applicable there, and the use of related modules in both stages allows a smoother transition from more-general to more-vocational learning.

Pupils with learning difficulties may start at a level of attainment well below that envisaged as the ordinary entry level for a course - in either compulsory education or vocational training. The need then arises to be able to offer reward for attainment at such a low level, in a way that is consistent with the overall aim of progression and the recognition of interrupted or partial learning. (Such partial credit is not, of course, to be confused with a complete vocational qualification).

Non-availability of partial credit in such circumstances is noted in several reports as an obstacle to the proper recognition of the value of these additional routes to regular learning/training. It is also a disincentive to some pupils to persevere.

Recognition at these levels may raise the bogey of "standards": lowering the bottom threshold at which recognition (credit) can be obtained can be represented as a threat to the credibility of the system of examination or certification. But ways round that have to be found. Otherwise the general principle of the openness and universality of the system of education and training is lost.

A cooperative Community effort in this area might would certainly be welcomed by those concerned to establish new procedures for partial credit.

Theme 8 Alternative - but equal - provision

Compulsory school

The reports show a clear tide in favour of maximum inclusion ie that special education and "difficult" pupils should as far as possible be educated along with their peers. Adapted education is the concept whereby the school is enabled, with extra resources, to adapt its provision to meet their individual needs.

There remains the question whether there are some pupils who for a shorter or longer time need to be offered an alternative to the provision of the compulsory school, in their own interests and in the interest of their peers. The reports varied a great deal in the extent to which the problem of difficult behaviour in compulsory school was dealt with, some going into educational questions much more fully than others.

It seems fairly clear that in some countries exclusion of pupils from school on grounds of behaviour is probably rising: several reports noted an increase in the number of pupils with social and emotional problems. Some of these pupils are likely not be able to keep to the norms of the school, and the school, equally, may be unable to tolerate their degree of difficult behaviour without breakdown or unreasonable disturbance. What then happens to them?

The answer is not "special education", or not that alone. Nor is it a matter of additional "instruction". There is evidence in the reports of "alternative" approaches being offered for a small minority, ie ways of identifying their needs and responses to them such that the result is not a dumping-ground or dead-end or some form of stigmatisation, but a genuine alternative of value in its own right.

The content, context, and extent of such provision are among the aspects that need to be considered. One aspect of importance is that the pupil remains in most cases registered in the home school, so as to permit both early reintegration and also continued association with his/her peer group in the social side of school life.

There are a number of starting points in the reports. They should be used to launch a discussion and review of current policy and practice in this area, and for exchange of ideas and experience on new developments.

Vocational training

Much the same questions arise in relation to initial vocational training. Some pupils cannot cope with regular provision, nor it with them. What models of "alternative" training, or of "alternative" routes into it, are available?

The report has shown that much has been done in several countries to adapt and extend normal provision, and preparation for it, to accommodate trainees with a range of personal and social problems. The limits of "normal" provision when backed up by assistance measures could be described, and the strengths and weaknesses of alternative provision examined from this experience.

A comparative study should be undertaken of these approaches, and a network of leading institutions and practitioners set up to further develop them within the framework of existing Community Initiatives.

Theme 9 Following-up early school leavers

Although most young people can be expected to complete their transition between compulsory school and the next stage of learning on their own, there is little reason to expect the same of those who, for whatever reason, have dropped out early from it, or arrived late at the end of it, or without a complete certificate, or even with none at all.

What happens then, and who is responsible for trying to ensure that they are aware of whatever pathways are on offer to them, and that they are prompted to start on one?

This is an area of increasing activity in terms of national practice. Some Member States still expect the early school leaver to sort out his/her own future. But there are now a number of countries where a compulsory registration system for early school leavers is attempted, and/or there is a legal requirement for guidance staff, or the school, to track down and interview the young person, once or more in the year or years immediately after he/she leaves school. There is also much positive experience of the value of involving other young people in "delivering" such information and advice, in those of the Community's many Youth Initiative Projects which have developed guidance functions.

The fragmentation of formal responsibility for different aspects of the well-being of the young person at this stage, between various authorities, is well illustrated in the reports. The range of solutions is increasing. Experience with them needs to be assessed and exchanged, so that policies which provide systematic help to early school leavers can be formulated.

It might be desirable to couple this with some international evaluation of the effectiveness of different types of Youth Guarantee, given that these are designed to "catch" early school leavers and offer them some form of work experience with preparatory (or qualifying) training. The "follow-up" and diagnostic function is vital in such measures, but the broader question of how successful the work experience/preparatory training provided proves to be, is also a matter of general interest for policy making.

Theme 10 Increasing the attractiveness of technical and vocational education and training

There are many indications in the reports of government concern to improve the attractiveness of technical-vocational education, to remedy its unattractiveness in the eyes of young people. Insofar as its poor image distorts young people' choices of career and training, it adds to the probability that some young people will drop out because either

- they are *unable to cope* with too-theoretical courses in general education and are "relegated" to technical or vocational school, thereby contributing to the image of these courses as second-best: or

- their (and their parents') *commitment* to post-compulsory education and training is weakened because they feel they are only getting a second-best if they enter the vocational sector instead of general education.

The historic and cultural associations of the technical and vocational sector(s) vary from country to country, but few countries are lucky enough to be able to feel that its social and economic worth and rewards are accurately or fairly projected to young people through the processes of advice and guidance in schools and in the wider community.

It is not an easy area to tackle. A number of basic questions arise:

- how far is the inferior treatment of technical and vocational education and training in official policy acceptable? In so many ways - financially, in quality of physical amenities, the quality of the learning environment, the choice of courses, the personal

freedom of the student, to name but a few - the university student is treated preferentially. Is this good economic sense, if the lack of technical trainees is a matter of concern?

- what can be done to alter systems of choice or selection which rely mainly on advice given by those who themselves were university-trained in non-technical occupations? What redress can be provided to project a more balanced choice to the young person? Are "works visits" or guest lecturers from firms enough, to ensure an objective picture is presented? If not, what else has to be done?

- the technical training world tends not to advertise itself: but in market economies, everything must do so, in some way, if it is to get its share of the market. Do the legal or other restrictions on its ability to do so need to be reexamined?

- how can such education and training be projected so that it is seen as of value in its own right, with rewards and satisfactions which are specific to it, and it alone?

Community-level cooperation, through comparison of approaches and exchange of experience, would be valuable here too. The cultural differences do not seem likely to be so great as to invalidate them.

Theme 11 Preventing drop-out during initial training

The approach to preventing dropping out from vocational training varies a good deal from country to country. Some have well-established measures to try to prevent it eg the German Assistance to the Disadvantaged programme: others eg Denmark and the Netherlands have recently set up special units or action programmes to tackle it. Other countries are considering such action, while still others simply rely on the flexibility of normal provision.

It is a complex area, and the report stresses the way that countries are now developing more complex, multi-level, multi-sectoral, measures to address it. There would clearly be value in comparison and analysis of approaches. A variety of questions could be examined at different levels of policy and practice. At the institutional level, for instance, the following might be considered:

- how far is there a common understanding of the reasons, taking account of variations in context and system?

- is it accepted, as the German programme stipulates, that "vocational training is not to be understood as a merely manual and cognitive learning process but also as personal development that prepares for an adult role in society"?

- what evidence is there of the success or limitations of "holistic" approaches to the presentation of general and vocational subjects in the trainee's curriculum? are modular approaches consistent with the idea of holistic teaching? what other problems arise with modularisation?

- is the idea of an "accompanying teacher" for a class of trainees throughout their course an effective measure?

- is "guidance" a sufficient answer to the needs of young trainees? What does it imply, who should be responsible for it, and how much attention and at what stages is optimal for reducing the drop-out rate?

A structured comparison of national/local action, based on the analysis in this report, could provide the basis for cooperative action across boundaries.

Theme 12 Strengthening alternance models of training

Alternance training is rapidly becoming **the** approach for all stages of technical and vocational training. Some Member States have a long history of using it, others virtually none. Because of its divided nature between firm and school/college it is difficult both to analyse and to perfect. That much could be done to improve the way it usually works seems clear from the comment made in various countries' reports.

Centres should be designated with a special role in focussing and communicating national experience and development work, in a Community framework. A cooperative programme of work should then be undertaken so as to bring together experience in the use of different versions of alternance training, and the results of experimental and developmental work.

The centres should also animate and support a network of the many actors and providers, both in business, the trade unions and providing schools/colleges in the public and private sectors, so as to increase awareness of, and disseminate good practice in, collaboration between local partners/providers of this form of training.

Theme 13 Raising the quality of teaching and training

Practice varies widely on provision of special training to help teachers and trainers deal with trainees with learning difficulties. Again, the most developed specific provision is to be found in Germany, though other countries no doubt have elements of relevant training in regular courses.

That there exists a need to help both teachers (of all kinds) in vocational schools/colleges and trainers in firms handle increasingly disparate groups of trainees seems generally accepted. That such training needs to be well anchored in the local/regional realities is also common ground. There would seem therefore to be a good case for examining here too the state of the art in greater depth, and finding out what expertise could be usefully shared; what gaps there are that could be filled through cooperative or joint action; and how such expertise can best be transmitted to the many providers in easily accessible and up-to-date ways.

Theme 14 Targets, and the need for a better statistical base for policy

The setting of targets for the reduction of failure in compulsory school eg the number of pupils leaving without full certification, is a feature of several countries' approaches to the need for a general strategy to address these problems. Such an approach depends on a sufficient supply of data about pupils and school performance.

The study reveals however there are a number of Member States where so far there is no such statistical basis: ie no statistics for drop-out/non-qualification at the end of compulsory school, or for rates of completion of courses in vocational training etc. Without them it is impossible to assess the return on any investment in either general reforms or local projects. This deficiency should be addressed, using the experience of other Member States as background.

Theme 15 Establish a Community data-base for this policy area

The national reports on which this study has been based, and this overview report, constitute a valuable set of reference material for policy-makers at all levels to draw on. Access to it should be organised, using the EURYDICE facility, and the material kept up-to-date, as part of the development of networks for inter-institutional exchange of experience in the context of eg the SOCRATES and LEONARDO programmes

Annex 1

Definitions of the target groups

Differences in the way the "disadvantaged" are defined in the national reports shed interesting light on different perceptions and priorities - whether on the part of the national experts, or their research agencies, or of the ministries responsible for sponsoring the reports. In any of these cases it also says something about national culture and policy towards disadvantage and deviance in young people.

Some reports in fact did not provide any definition: perhaps there the disadvantaged are simply so numerous that precise identification seemed unnecessary. Other countries have authoritative definitions, in law or administratively.

A little historical perspective is helpful to understanding the differences of treatment in the reports.

- Ministries of Education have customarily recognised as "special" the group of pupils with medically recognised learning difficulties especially the physically and mentally disabled

- To these, the Ministries of Education, concerned with achieving greater equality of opportunity/access/participation, may have added a further group as being entitled to some degree of positive discrimination, also seen as having learning difficulties and therefore "at risk": young people from socially- or socio-economically disadvantaged families. Identification here is much more difficult than with the disabled. While at first identified by their background eg being from poor or poorly-educated parents, emphasis now seems to be placed more on their behaviourial performance ie the social and emotional problems which they present in school. Increases in the size of this group seem to be a feature of the reports, for whatever reasons: it may be because of increased concern; greater attention to them owing to their being longer in school; or even, more generally, a greater prevalence of behaviour disorders due to changes in the social, economic or physical environment

- In recent years, young immigrants will have become a noticeable element in both these categories. They command attention as being disadvantaged in various ways eg linguistically

- Since the 1980s, the Labour/Employment Departments have been concerned with another group of disadvantaged: those young people who are in difficulty in entering the labour market ie are unemployed and at risk of remaining so.

- This in turn has led to a new "mixed" classification, based on employment policy but related to education policy too: those who have failed in school and are disadvantaged, as a result, in terms of entering the labour market.

In practice, there is a lot of overlap between these "groups". Many of them might be seen as the same people differently perceived and classified according to different policy viewpoints. The differences in emphasis reflect differences in policy approach: the education departments tending to emphasise aetiological, social, interpretations; the employment departments tending to use personal characteristics as defining criteria, because they provide a precise basis for the assessment of entitlement to specific training etc measures.

Some of the reports - ie the Norwegian and Dutch - describe how Member States have given formal, precise definition to this last "mixed" classification. Some countries' reports can be seen inclining more to the educational type of definition (France, Ireland); most tend to use "mixed" classifications.

An example of an official education-oriented definition is that quoted in the **French** report:

> In France, after the raising of the school-leaving age to 16 in 1967, the *collèges* were supposed to be able to cope with the totality of pupils: teaching was to be differentiated, selective streaming was abolished, there were to be fewer remedial classes (CCPN). But in the 1970s and 80s the explosion of pupil numbers resulting in the arrival of young people in secondary school without the basic "prerequisites", fluency in reading for example, made a nonsense of curriculum and guidance practices which were essentially directed towards getting the pupil ready for entry to *lycée* and underlined the importance of academic knowledge. "*Orientation*"[18] hurdles were introduced at the end of the first year which have only recently been abolished. It is only with the passing of the *Loi d'orientation* in 1989 that the "*premier cycle*" (the curriculum of the first 3 years of the 11-16 comprehensive *collège*) has been really thought able to cope properly with the whole range of young people
>
> This has provided a base for identifying young people who are "in difficulty". As the extent of the problems became clear, the Ministry drew up three criteria, and a young person who qualified on two of them was deemed "in difficulty" while those that fulfilled all three were seen as "in severe difficulty". The criteria were
>
> - late arrival in secondary school because of repeating in the primary school
>
> - poor results on the assessments (in French and mathematics) made of the pupil on entry to secondary school
>
> - failure to progress to the third year class, after 2 years in *collège*
>
> Currently about 25% are thought to be in the first category, and a third of them in the second

[18] see page 27

Since length of participation and success in education are strongly related to social factors linked to family, education policies aimed at helping disadvantaged young people have led to the development of preventive intervention strategies which are community- or area- or school-based:

> The **Irish** report emphasises that the now almost-universal participation in secondary education, while it may have increased educational opportunity, has not had equivalent success in reducing educational inequalities of outcome and attainment. Universal exposure to the same national curriculum is not an automatic producer of social equality. Pupils' home circumstances are crucial in determining how well they do at school. "Tackling educational disadvantage goes much further than educational policy; it has implications for employment, housing and health policies too."
>
> "The school, community, and family have increasingly come to be seen as of equal importance in determining educational equality". Increased participation rates do not necessarily produce a reduction in the exclusion process. "In the Irish case it is very noticeable that differences in educational outcomes are related to class origins."
>
> [Unfortunately] "recent educational strategies in **Ireland**, although including the family and community to a greater extent, do so with the intention of improving school participation and performance rather than the development of the whole individual".

The **Luxemburg** report is also partly social in its approach: it describes the group of "young people at risk" (*jeunes en difficulté*) as mainly made up of young people who

> - have been in "*enseignement complémentaire*" and left school late, without any qualification, and often after a number failures ie repeated classes
> - are likely to be from unskilled workers' or immigrants' families
> - are likely to comprise more men than women
> - are likely to have had little or no experience of stable employment even though they may be between 20 and 29 years of age
>
> Many suffer also from other marks of socio-economic disadvantage eg lack of social and cultural integration etc.

We should now turn to some more "mixed" definitions.

The basic stance in the **German** approach is that "to be unqualified means to be disadvantaged" and so to broaden the category of the disadvantaged to include all those who are at risk of entering the labour market unqualified. The result is clearly an employment policy-based definition broadened but without losing its suitability for use as a test of eligibility.

In the "Assistance to the Disadvantaged" programme,

> **Germany** combines the socially disadvantaged and the "disabled" or "handicapped". Para 40c of the Employment Promotion Law defines "disadvantaged" as
>
> - secondary general school leavers without a school leaving certificate
> - former special school pupils
> - young foreigners
> - socially disadvantaged young people eg
>   - those being supported by Public Youth Assistance
>   - former drug addicts and ex-detainees

- young resettled persons (eg from Central and Eastern Europe)
- young people suffering from dyslexia
- young people diagnosed by the school psychological service as "exhibiting conspicuous behaviour"

But Germany is the only country where the definition is embedded in law. Other reporters had to infer definitions from practice or the apparent or stated intentions of legislation or administration. This tends to result in definitions which interpret education as well as labour legislation, and therefore combine the more-etiological and more-behaviourial approaches with an accent on the extent of access to, and performance in, training:

Thus the **UK report** starts out by saying that

> in the UK (England and Wales), in considering the possible ways of defining disadvantaged, a distinction needs to be drawn between the concept of "equal opportunities" and "special needs". The former is recognised in legislation concerning sex discrimination, race discrimination, and the requirement to employ a proportion of handicapped people. It merges into the discussion of the distribution of social and economic opportunities and identification of "barriers to access", while "special needs", which is in origin an education concept, is used with a broader meaning in the training field also

The **UK** report therefore defines as disadvantaged

- those who leave school with less than NVQ2 equivalent (passes in 5 GCSE subjects or an NVQ/SVQ 2)
- those who need special help at school or other educational institution
- those who do not undertake training after they leave school
- those who need special help to be trained to NVQ2 level (or below)
- those who need special help to access further education or training

and adds that there is overlap between these categories. It uses 14-19 as the age span for "young people" though noting that removal of discrimination by age is a main thrust of education and training policies

The **Austrian** report also merges the disadvantaged and the disabled into one grouping:

- "renouncers of training" ie drop-outs after compulsory school
- "drop-outs" from a vocational programme
- young people from socio-economically impaired families (as well as adolescents from families with many children)
- young people from rural areas
- children of work migrants (with poor command of language)
- young people who are physically or mentally challenged

The **Greek** report is a little different in adding to the socially disadvantaged those from secondary general education who are disadvantaged by failure at the point of university entry[19]: it thus sees as disadvantaged

- the economically and socially privileged, who choose the university-oriented track in high school, with no vocational elements in it; it is estimated that 3/4s of them fail to get into university, and they are not eligible to enter any other form of tertiary education

[19] but see Annex 2 for a different view of this category of failure

- a second group made up of those, from disadvantaged backgrounds, who for reasons we shall see below, fail in lower secondary school

Recent definitions

It is interesting to note two examples relevant to this study where governments have brought together education-based and employment-based thinking to produce a new policy-related definition.

The **Norwegian** report rehearsed the history of the Blegen Commission's thinking on the definition of a target group for the new Follow Up service, and arrived at a precise definition:

> In **Norway**, the Blegen Commission, responsible for the new Reform 94 plan, observed that up to now the education sector and employment sector have each defined their target groups:
>
> - education tends to focus on *those unable to benefit from mainstream educational programmes and who eventually drop out*. The response has been to provide extra teacher training in special education for teachers in compulsory and upper secondary school, and to develop new courses in guidance and counselling for teachers and guidance personnel in the school system
>
> - labour market authorities have the *registered unemployed* as their special target group, which includes people of a wider range of ability and former schooling, though those without formal qualifications are overrepresented
>
> Thus there is an overlap between the two, but different types of expertise in counselling and guidance have been developed for these groups within the different sectors. The joint criteria for defining the target group for the new Follow Up Service in upper secondary school imply that different professional groups, located in different public sectors, will have to cooperate to provide expertise for dealing with a wide range of problems in a merged area of education and employment counselling.
>
> The Follow Up Service will operate on a definition provided in the Blegen Commission Report which seeks to bridge the two;
>
> ***young people aged 16-19 who were not enrolled in education or training programmes and were unemployed***
>
> The Commission advised against trying to label the group by giving it a special name such as the "remainder group". It observed that the group's defining characteristic is lack of formal institutional attachments. There seems to be widespread agreement that the group consists of a heterogeneous mix of young people with very different characteristics and problems

Finally we another recently-developed definition where entitlement to a minimum training qualification is the basis for defining a new target group, at which a battery of new measures are to be directed. The result is a training-qualification-based definition, but related to measures in both the education and training fields. This is the **Dutch** approach in its 1993 Action Plan

> The **Dutch** report uses a narrower definition based on the concept introduced in the Rauwenhoff Committee's report (1990) of a "right to a **starting qualification**" defined as "equal to the level of beginning skilled worker ie the leaving level of an initial apprenticeship course". This aim was to be the aim set for all school leavers, job seekers, and the unemployed. The target group thus becomes:

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- those who leave full-time education without vocational qualification and who are not able to realise vocational qualification in part-time education

Target groups for the study

The report here follows closely the thinking behind these approaches. We have adopted for the study a double-focus target group made up of

- **those who do not complete, or do not succeed in, compulsory education.**

- **those who fail to obtain a basic vocational qualification in post-compulsory education or training.**

Annex 2

Reducing Early School Leaving:

the 1993 Plan in the Netherlands

The **Dutch** government published in 1993 an ambitious Plan to reduce early school leaving in compulsory and post-compulsory education.

The national action plan provides targets, measures, means and extra resources, with a specific quantified target to reduce the priority-group ie the "hard-core" of early school leavers from compulsory education without a certificate (ESLs) by 50% in 6 years, from 12,500 to 6,250. The policy represents a shift from curative action in the margin of the school system to preventive action in the mainstream. Implementation of the measures is still proceeding.

Aim

The aim is to ensure that all young people gain an "entrance-qualification" ie a vocational qualification of value on the labour market. Such a qualification is seen as having a social-cultural function as well as an economic one.

The ESL can be seen from the education-supply side as an internal school internal problem: a matter of better educational adjustment for pupils likely to be at risk, and improving transition between the different stages within the school system. From the demand side, it can be seen as focusing on the external effects and conditions, ie improving the adjustment of the labour market and bringing about better cooperation between the partners in the labour market field.

From the demand side, the problem is not only that pupils reach too restricted a level of qualification but also that pupils, especially females, make career choices which do not correspond well to the market available.

The plan aims therefore at

- a better balance between the different demands on the education system

- to compose an effective mix of measures or instruments to have the right effect for the goals in view.

Tensions to be taken into account are:

- between internal efficiency and access, and quality
- between output and input: ie effects and financial means
- between autonomy and dependence
- between the national frame and regional ones.

Definition of ESL

ESL is defined as all school leavers who are no longer in full-time or part-time education or training or apprenticeship, and who have not obtained an acknowledged vocational qualification of at least Level 1 or 2 ie on senior secondary vocational education level.

(There has been discussion whether possession of a senior secondary **general** education level (ie HAVO5 or VWO6) certificate should or should not be regarded as an entrance qualification for these purposes, and the government has decided quite clearly that it should: unqualified leavers from tertiary education are not seen as ESLs.)

Target group

The target group will be divided according to level of education reached:

- ESLs who leave junior secondary education and go no further and do not have a qualification/diploma of junior secondary education
- the drop-outs - ie all who leave the education system at different points eg from senior secondary education, and have in common that they do not have any acknowledged qualification/diploma.

The target group is seen as young people aged 16 to 19 with problem-rich school careers who leave school early

- who do not enter vocational education
- who enter vocational education but do not succeed in qualifying on any senior secondary level.

Special attention will be paid to risk-groups who are over-represented like ethnic minorities, the handicapped, and women. The main categories are seen as

- ESLs already oriented to the labour market

- those with learning difficulties

- hard-to-reach ESLs with multiple difficulties: learning, behaviour, social, physical

Lines of action

Solutions are to be sought along several distinct lines:

- strengthening the school

- activating actors outside the school

- stimulating regional arrangements

- strengthening the responsibility of the pupil him/her self.

Key elements in the approach

- the accent on prevention, but also watertight reporting and leading-back and better monitoring of ESLs

- the accent on a regional approach, with cooperation and linking of forces of all actors (regional plans, sets of agreements, support for the coordination function)

- enhancing responsibilities of all actors: accounting for results, output-element in financing

- more differentiation in supply and approach: need for low-level (*assistent*) qualification, and adapted methods of teaching

- enhancing decision-taking in schools: deregulation, removing financial and institutional dividing lines

- enhancing expertise.

Main innovations

The national report highlighted the following main innovations:

- introduction of a lower secondary core curriculum

- streaming and profiling in junior secondary education and senior secondary general education

- integration of mbo and apprenticeship system, and setting up of Regional Education/training Centres (ROCs)

- removing of obstructing dividing lines (institutional, financial, managerial, formal) and transformation into a self-regulated system, with new lump-sum financing system with input-factor, output-factor, and special target-group bonus

- combining school and work: more variety in dual pathways, better use of infrastructure of practice-places, strengthening dual learning (financial/ fiscal) with incentives for providing more practice places, stimulating regional arrangements

- tracing of ESLs and leading them back to school (mostly dual pathways); safety-net for ESLs: regional report and coordination function (RMC); enforcement of compulsory education regulations; stimulating regional arrangements; safety net for workless young people (Youth Guarantee Plan - JWG) in relation to education

- developing *assistent* qualifications on EU Level 1 for *assistent* functions as an acknowledged qualification in the national qualification structure; at the bottom of the labour market stimulating the creation of more *assistent* functions (split-up functions)

- acknowledging qualifications learned outside the institutional school system eg qualifying work experience/prior learning by shorter paths

- integration of special education facilities for special groups in the mainstream: no more dead-end paths without an acknowledged qualification; more variety in aid-structures

- demand-led financing/gearing of support by intermediate organisations eg in the field of guidance.

Annex 3

"Individual programmes"

in upper secondary school in Sweden

Every municipality in **Sweden** is obliged to offer young people under 20 *who are not on a national programme an individually designed programme.* This is primarily intended to stimulate the pupil to transfer subsequently to a national programme. A pupil can combine employment aimed at vocational training with studies. Such apprenticeship training is spread over three school years and includes the core subjects.

Pupils who for various reasons do not apply for upper secondary school education on one of the national programmes or who are not admitted to the education they applied for *must be offered a place on an individual programme* provided by the authority responsible.

The motives here are:

- compensatory (for pupils who lack knowledge and competence)
- motivational and guiding (for pupils who lack the urge to study or are uncertain in their choice of studies)
- supporting (for pupils who have not been admitted on the course of their first choice or who have interrupted their upper secondary school education)
- individual orientation outside the national programmes.

The individual programme is primarily intended to stimulate the pupil to continue on a national or specially designed programme.

Individual study plan

All pupils participating on an individual programme have an individual study plan, which should state the content, the expected duration and the purpose of the education. The plan shows the local authority's commitment to the pupil. It can only be changed at the express wish of the pupil.

Box 45 Success of the "individual programmes" **Sweden**

In October 1993 about 12,500 young people aged 16-20 were participating in individual programmes, about as many as were starting on a natural science/technical education. In a 1992 study of the pupils on individual programmes

- 40% had not applied to any programme or line in the upper secondary school
- 45% had applied but had not got in because their grades were too low
- only 1.5% had applied directly to have an individual programme

Transfer to a national programme appears to be growing more and more frequent. In one municipality 144/200 applied for a place on a national programme for 1994/5 and 115 were accepted. In 1992/3, 60% of pupils on individual programme applied for a national one

Transfer from a national to an individual programme, in other words the number of pupils dropping out from their studies, has increased in some municipalities but not in others. The vocationally oriented programmes have a higher proportion of theoretical subjects and courses than the previous two-year lines of education. Some people fear that this will lead to a situation where more pupils who want a vocational training feel they are not getting what they expected and discontinue their upper secondary school studies as a result

Apprenticeship training

Apprenticeship training can be arranged within the framework of the individual programme. The school provides a locally-developed package of the 5 core subjects (Swedish, English, mathematics, civics, and religious studies). All the core subjects may be provided if the pupil wishes.

Only 54 pupils in 24 municipalities are currently following this form of apprenticeship: it is still too early to say why this is so.

Duration

The individual programme usually lasts one year, but the time taken can vary from 2 weeks to several school years. There are examples of pupils taking the whole of their upper secondary school education on one, lasting 3 or 4 years.

Content

The individual programme is based on the pupil's needs and on local conditions and should be built around the core subjects of the upper secondary school. Pupils often study the core subjects but below upper secondary school level. In other words they have not reached a level in these subjects to allow them to study the upper secondary school courses.

Content varies widely: many municipalities offer ready-made courses or course packages in areas such as: computer science, the theory of motor vehicle driving, child studies,

gardening, forestry, job applications, home maintenance, home economics, joinery, courses in the building and workshop areas, food, and distribution and clerical.

Most pupils on individual programmes alternate theory with practice. The many variations range from one-day's theory and one day's practice, through half theory and half practice, to exclusively theory or practice. The most common is 60:40, practice and theoretical instruction.

Non-stigmatising organisation

Pupils on individual programmers and plans belong to the upper secondary school: some are taught in the same premises as the other pupils, others in separate premises. Pupils who need a lot of help and support may have their training located at a workplace or else work in special training workshops for the mentally retarded.

Pupils still continue to belong to their class while on an individual study programme: they do not therefore need to leave their classmates or feel singled out for not coping with their studies.

Reduced and prolonged individual programmes

Pupils may prolong their studies: municipalities are obliged to offer all pupils a complete upper secondary school education, which means that pupils can take longer than the normal 3 years. Pupils may also take what is known as a reduced programme, ie not all the subjects are studied in order to get the upper secondary school certificate. Pupils may also repeat a year.

Annex 4

External and internal school "units" in Norway

The Oslo Alternative School Unit

The development in **Norway** of small external units to provide for a very small proportion of pupils was described in chapter 4.

The Oslo external alternative school unit, which is on a larger scale, is similar in approach. It also

- organises pupils into one of 12 different project groups (running the school canteen, running a conference centre in the school, environment preservation, running a commercial boat marina, etc) designed to prepare pupils for vocational careers

- seeks to maintain *superior quality in its teaching of vocational subjects*: as part of its normalisation policy, teachers convey that they consider the ordinary lower secondary school lacking in its vocational orientation, and that the unit is trying to make up for this deficiency

- emphasises, as part of its "normal" profile, that it has the minimum of contact with the "guardians of deviance" ie the police and various institution for psychological treatment, cooperating instead actively with the local association of industrialists and some major local companies

- sees modularisation of curricula and the possible introduction of an accreditation system based on units of competence as a possible way to extend its provision to include programmes for post-16 pupils in the future, since it is not satisfied with the upper secondary school's provision for its pupils.

Evaluation studies have shown that pupils who are educated in external alternative units benefit from the provision, and improve their academic results as well as their social adjustment.

Box 46 Results from evaluation of external units, 1991 **Norway**

Positive results

- external units are more successful in terms of improved pupil adjustment and school results ie improved grades
- a "vicious circle seems to have been broken" and a new pattern of positive interaction established in the new environment
- a noticeable change of attitude in the pupils after transfer to the unit
- pupils, parents and teachers held favourable attitudes to the unit
- teachers saw pupils who had been considered "hopeless" in their home school as no longer primarily problem children
- 75-90% of pupils managed well after leaving compulsory school ie had not developed patterns of excessive drinking or drug abuse, had not committed any criminal offences, had a place to live, and kept in touch with family and friends. They themselves also seemed content with their situation
- 83% of the school-leavers from alternative school applied to enter upper secondary school; some were admitted on special conditions; most applied for vocational courses. Although 25% dropped out subsequently in their first year, this is no more than the average for entrants admitted on special conditions
- The unemployment rate for these pupils one year after leaving school was 5%

Negative

- the units had a poor record of success with pupils who had serious psychological problems and were involved in drinking, drug abuse, and criminal behaviour. They were seen to need therapeutic treatment which the units were not equipped to provide
- after leaving compulsory school some school leavers had unstable job attachments and most of their jobs were in unemployment schemes

The Ramsvik resource

Keeping difficult pupils in their own class and channelling resources to the school to enable them to tackle the problems is an alternative to establishing external provision.

A group of schools are being supported by a Resource centre - the Ramsvik Resource - which was previously a boarding special school in Stavanger.

The basic premises for the reorganisation of 10 lower secondary schools were:

- an ecological perspective on human behaviour. In order to produce change in pupils' behaviour, the school environment must change its ways of reacting to specific behaviours. This meant that the school, as the environment for the pupil, must be prepared to change

- less bureaucratic and more particularistic ways of dealing with behavioral problems. Children with behavioral problems are a heterogeneous group and different approaches should be applied in each case

- the teachers need additional qualifications to deal with this work

- the work should be subjected to continuous evaluation.

The central idea of the Ramsvik Resource was the decentralisation of responsibility for pupils with behavioral problems, so that each school had an incentive to develop qualifications and expertise in solving them. The pupils who are registered for special attention in their home school constitute on average 6% of all the pupils in the lower secondary schools in the area: some as many as 12%, in others as few as 2%. The variation between the schools illustrates the difference in what are regarded as behavioral problems.

Within each school,

- school teams of 3-4 were recruited among the regular school staff, *selected for their special qualities as teachers*

- the team was given an extra 20 hours of teacher work a week as an extra resource

- the team teachers divided their time between ordinary classroom work (50%) and remedial teaching (15%) and counselling and individual follow-up of pupils (8%)

Individual talks and counselling consume most of the extra teacher time provided by the resource. The teachers in the team also participate directly in the classrooms of colleagues, either to observe or to assist in the teaching or for direct intervention with pupils. Sometimes such participation is done to obtain order in the class. Such practice is described as "sitting on" the pupil ie keeping close to the source of trouble. The close cooperation between colleagues makes for more involvement in solving problems among regular class teachers.

Three assistants were appointed to cover the 10 schools, not as teachers but as a new category of school employee: participating in classroom sessions, but also in contact with the pupils during school breaks and sometimes after school hours. Formally their job was to

- participate in active measures for pupils with behavioral problems, as part of the school team
- develop preventive measures in the school as a whole

- provide pupils with support and assistance in the transition betwen cp and upper secondary school

They also

- serve as liaisons with the external network of the school (the social welfare office, child protection authorities etc)
- play an active role in preventing truancy by making home visits where pupils have not turned up at school and bringing them there.

Evaluations

The Ramsvik Resource has been evaluated in 3 different reports. Among the questions examined was whether the measures inside the school would make external provision superfluous: the answer was "No": in spite of active work to accommodate and help pupils with special problems there were still pupils whom the school could not help, who seemed to require a kind of individual treatment that the school could not provide.

The divergent innovative efforts at the local level with regard to provision for those who do not benefit from mainstream teaching practices illustrate the autonomy enjoyed by local municipalities in organising compulsory education. Innovations seem to be initiated by strongly committed educators and officials who have vision and ideas. Local solutions are also inspired through the exchange of ideas in a national network which teachers in alternative compulsory school units have established.

Annex 5

The Mission Nouvelles Qualifications in France

The *Mission Nouvelles Qualifications* (New Qualifications Initiative) is an initiative in alternance training, aimed at a fundamental rethink of the Level V diploma and the CAP and at a reexamination of alternance training itself.

It was launched (1983-86) by Bertrand Schwartz, with the aim of assisting the transition into qualified employment of young people with a poor school and vocational record.

It started from a number of observations, centred on the disappointing results of alternance training

- alternance training provided work experience periods which were too short to enable trainees to obtain a qualification, and at the end of it jobs which were undemanding and menial

- there was not enough articulation, or osmosis, between the alternating periods of training and work. The resulting gap meant that the young person's training was disrupted, because of the difficulty in establishing coherence between the two axes of training. Incoherence could be seen again at another level in the non-adaptation of the content of the CAP (Vocational Training Certificate) to the various technical and technological etc changes in industry

- the ineffectiveness of supervision and preparation: on the one hand teachers were not assisting or supporting the young people effectively, and on the other the trainers did not know enough about the world of industry and lacked the resources to ensure proper integration of their teaching with the young person's practical work

- the enormous rise in youth unemployment because of both the restructuring of the workforce (continual loss of jobs for unqualified workers) and rising levels of recruitment, with the Education Ministry responding to these changes by down-grading the importance of the CAP, setting up the Vocational Baccalaureates, and developing the Bacc+2 level of qualification.

The *"Nouvelles Qualifications"* experiment was set up as a response to these developments, which were seen as resulting in a marginalisation of unqualified young people while employers were recruiting staff over-qualified for the jobs they had to do.

At the heart of the experiment was a new conception of learning by alternance, and the need to redefine the content of a CAP and the jobs to which it was related. It naturally also aims to deal with the weakness identified in the way alternance training works. Its originality lies in its approach to the nature and organisation of training, which is seen as "inductive", ie that *training has to be derived from the job*. It should not antagonise the trainee to school-based learning, - the excessive abstraction of which is stressed - as usually happens with young people who have experienced failure in school.

The basic idea is of passing to and fro between on the one hand the situations encountered by the trainee in work, and training on the other. The definition of the content of the training should not be predetermined but decided step by step as a product of these work situations, and what happens in them, and the training "needs" which they reveal to the young person (ie individualised training). *Work experience in other words should provide the starting points for going back and acquiring the necessary formal knowledge.*

The approach thus shares some characteristics with that of *Insertion par l'Economique* (Assisted Employment)

- immediate immersion in a working environment as the basis for learning

- acceptance of the possibility that completely unqualified young people can be given skilled jobs in the production process

- providing the opportunity to experience a real working environment

- learning, through experience of working, the functional skills and the know-how needed for work.

Equally, the skill requirements and content of the job are not fixed in advance but built up from the training and working of the young people, ie from their actual experience. The result is a fundamental challenge to the normal link, or dependency, between training and work, because here the two are obliged to develop at the same time:

> "What I was doing was to break the traditional link between training and work, whereby, since the beginning of time, the job has determined the training... I proposed to insert a new link which I saw as necessary between defining the job and the organisation of the work context:...and I looked forward to the (hitherto unthinkable) possibility of training being able to influence the relationship between skills and the way work is organised"

Emphasis was placed also on the need for better articulation of the work-based and other training periods, through closer interaction between the tutor, the trainee and the "trainer-coordinator". On this depended a positive outcome from the situations encountered at work,

and progression in the training. It also helped to motivate the trainees as they could see themselves as influencing the development of their own training, though their participation in successive discussions of the problems they had encountered in their working situations.

Extension nationwide

The experiment, linked to a review of the flexibility and future of qualifications at Level V, was relaunched and extended nationwide in 1989. A national structure was set up, with decentralised regional teams, and the remit extended to include older employees as well as the training and employment of young people.

Implementation ran into difficulties with the institutions involved. There was a need for partnership as well as considerable resources to support the measure along with others. The initiative was rather isolated from other initiatives in its area. As a result it turned most to firms which had not been involved by other initiatives.

Although the initiative gained recognition as a useful experiment in assisting transition into work by the National Employment Agency (ANPE), the Ministry of Labour, and the *Fonds d'Assurance Formation*) other bodies were not so receptive to it, eg the GRETAs (the Ministry of Education bodies for further education and training) and AFPA (the Association for Adult Education and Training) and the network of CFI (see chapter 4).

Difficulties lay in the fact that the initiative's approach was totally opposed to general practice, and that there was therefore no way that comparability between them could be achieved. CFI, for instance, was based on a logic (assessment, remedial courses, and skill-training) that was completely different from *Nouvelles Qualifications*. "Such difficulties are inherent in any structure which tries to develop an innovative approach, acting transversally across a series of bodies which each have their own system and methods of working".

It had to be admitted that in practice the experiment did not work exactly according to plan as originally conceived. In particular, the tutor/trainee/trainer dialogue was not always sufficient and the jobs offered were not always suitable to this approach to training: some did not lead to a real qualification, or the content of the job did not make it possible to assess and certify what had been learnt. However, according to one evaluation, the coordinator-trainers played their role well, and setting up tutoring arrangements and the gains in understanding by the employees were valued.

The statistical picture (as of November 1991) leads to various observations:

- the young people involved were unqualified. 60% of the 450 young people involved in the 38 experiments of the first phase were Level VI or V*bis*.[20] 45% were between 20 and 22

[20] these are the two levels below Level V which is regarded by the Ministry of Education as the minimum qualification that all young people should achieve - see chapter 2

- the drop-out rate in the period of the experiment was 20%. The rest completed the course and obtained a qualification. 7.5% had no job at the time of the evaluation in 1988, the others being almost all in permanent employment

- the alternance period, lasting about 2 years, was mainly supported by the use of *contrats de qualification*.

Nouvelles Qualifications is the only experiment reported which fundamentally challenges the concepts and practice of alternance training, not only on the grounds of its inadequacy for meeting the needs of unqualified young people but also for contributing to employers seeking to recruit applicants who are over-qualified. It is relevant to attempts to improve alternance and to break down the strong tendency in initial training to separate, or at least to fail to coordinate effectively, the two learning contexts, in the firm and in the school.

It is not only the teaching/learning process which is put under scrutiny: the world of the firm is too, for its inability to take in and train young people well, and for the need to reexamine the way work in it is organised and the specific skills need for individual jobs.

Annex 6

A study of a "hard core" of disadvantaged young people

There is a tendency to try to divide those who fail in, or drop out of, compulsory school into groups, and to devise measures to address the problems they present to schools, or schools present to them. One of the terms that comes into use, in this context, is that of the most difficult "group", to whom the term "the hard core" is sometimes attached.

The **French** report described some research on this term. Three *Missions Locales* in the Nancy (Lorraine) employment area examined the composition of the group which they themselves had labelled "hard core", in the sense that they had been on the books of the *Mission* for over four years without any long-term employment solution being found for them.

The research showed

- the limitations of the capability of the *Missions* but at the same time their ability to make visible a population existing on the edge of the employment market

- there was not really, in this case, one "hard core" but several: married girls; rather old young people who are socially isolated (*les "jeunes de la galère"*); some young people who are almost permanently in some form of training initiative/scheme and who bear worst the brunt of the restructuring of work and employment and call into question the very concept of *"insertion"*

- from these observations one could identify a "hard core of the hard core", whose characteristics were

    - they had been in care at an early age in their childhood and educated in childcare institutions

    - they suffered from severe health problems and psychological difficulties

    - they had a problematical family background, not just divorce or the death of their parents but particularly their parents' social exclusion

This was not the whole story, however. What also marked them out is the length of time since they left school and first started on one of the training initiatives/schemes: some had been out of school for 7 years, and others as long as 11 years, and had spent 30% of this time on training schemes. The toll taken by enroling in these schemes or transition training courses (employment preparation courses; courses to get ready for CFI) had been severe.

These courses are characterised by complete absence of any objective in terms of offering a vocational qualification, and by theoretical and practical firm-based alternance training which can be summed up very simply: rarely more than one month in a firm in a course that does not last more than six.

Annex 7

Training disadvantaged young people in a market system

United Kingdom "Youth Training"

In the **UK** the government is committed to a market model for the management of the system including the resources available for the disadvantaged. The new arrangements in England and Wales are as follows.

The providing colleges receive most of their funds by bidding to the central Funding Council; the formula is for the most part now related to course provision plans, and in small part to "outcomes" ie students' success in achieving qualifications. Colleges also bid for training contracts with their local funding council, the Training and Enterprise Council (TEC).

It is clear that illiteracy and lack of basic skills affect a large number in the colleges: a 1993 report showed

- 5% had communication skills so poor that they needed extra help to reach an NVQ level 1; and 14% had a similar lack of numeracy skills
- 37% would need help in communication skills to reach NVQ level 2, and 47% with numeracy
- in every college surveyed, at least 50% of students had problems with numeracy skills.

As a result, much more priority is now being given to basic skills courses ("Wordpower", and "Numberpower").

Youth Training (YT), the government-financed training scheme for young people, was chosen by about 11% of 16 year-olds in 1992. The proportion has fallen steeply as more young people stay on longer in full-time education.

With the establishment of "Modern Apprenticeships" for those who previously entered YT for high-quality high-skill work-based training, YT is now experiencing a corresponding rise in the percentage of young people entering YT for whom the pursuit of academic qualifications is not a viable option. This group includes, according to the Employment Department:

"- those who are intellectually limited
- those who have been unable to develop basic skills of reading and writing during their school life
- those for whom English is their second language
- those who have missed out on school through ill-health or physical disability
- those disaffected young people who have rejected school life."

It is thus clear that trainees on YT suffer from a variety of social and other problems as well as cognitive ones. Under the Employment Department regulations young people with physical, mental, social or personal disabilities, difficulties or disadvantage, may be "endorsed" as students with assessed learning difficulties (SLDD). The Department recognises that this group of young people need additional support and resource if they are to achieve success through training programmes.

In some TEC areas as many as 1 in 4 young people starting or re-starting YT are "endorsed". The cost to TECs of such support may be 2-3 times that of standard training activity. This enhanced payment is in recognition of increased costs to training providers of higher staffing ratios, more workshop time, and less income from placement providers. Given the increasing percentage of trainees who need additional support, effective endorsement procedures become essential to safeguard value for money.

Most YT is provided by private contractors and colleges. Both face funding problems arising from

- difficulties over classification of the young people before training begins
- payment only being made for outcomes, which are unrealistic for some SLDD trainees
- the application to SLDD students of the strict rules on social security entitlement.

Pressure to take a place on YT is deliberately reinforced by young people's ineligibility for unemployment benefit until age 18. YT is perceived by young people as the least desirable post-16 option, but they and those who advise them (the Careers Service) can be tempted to agree an individual Action Plan, for a young person, directed towards available vacancies even though they may not be particularly suitable. To reduce this risk, Careers Officers in some areas make strenuous efforts to obtain guidance interviews with the young people, through home visits if necessary. In one case they achieved a small reduction in drop-out and change of programme (2%). It is intended that the clearer procedures for the new contracted Careers Service will lead to greater standardisation in assessment.

There are experiments in two TEC areas with 100% outcome-related funding; these are being carefully evaluated, in part to make sure that the funding formula does not have undesired

effects. One funding problem is that, however generous the extra payment is for trainees with learning difficulties, unless payment is made for stages achieved towards an outcome, progress without achievement of the full outcome goes unrewarded financially for the provider.

The funding arrangements for *Training for Work* which provides training for adults (age 18-64) are similarly outcome-based (25% in this case). Priority is given to the unemployed and also to the 18-25s. A system is being tried whereby payment is made according to "starts", instead of training weeks, and outcomes; this system encourages shorter training.

Annex 8

Labour market measures

The "preparatory" and "stepping stones" measures described in chapter 4, supported by education authorities alone or with others, are aimed at providing intermediate or bridging help to enable young people to enter/reenter regular training. In the first high unemployment period of the 1970s and 80s, many schemes were developed, generally by Employment authorities, with the immediate aim of getting young people off the unemployment register and offering them something worthwhile to do. Some, eg the **Danish** Production Schools, developed a new approach to helping unemployed young people; most offered a short-term mixture of training and employment, without extra support or guidance to help the young person reintegrate into education and training. Many were co-financed by the European Social Fund.

In general these Labour Market measures were seen as

- strictly temporary, to be wound up when better times returned, though this has not always happened (yet)

- supplementary to, and not in competition with, the established system of education and training.

These Labour Market schemes continue to play a part, - a major part in some countries eg Ireland, Portugal, Spain, - in the training of young people. The need to move towards their integration into an overall system which provides young people with a qualification and a thus credit for the training as a basis for further training, is generally recognised.

Some of the types available are illustrated below.

As an example of a new move towards integration, **Norway**'s Reform 94 requires local authorities to take over responsibility for the 16-19 age group, which will mean that funding of joint schemes by Labour Market Authorities, such as some of those illustrated below, will cease.

Norway's provision includes

- *the Work Practice scheme*; introduced in 1983, it is the largest targeting young people (11,500 16-24s in 1993); provides normally 6-month training programmes in firms or public bodies. Offers more training than its predecessor scheme (Work Preparatory Programme) and research shows it increases young people's chances of being employed: the more formal training offered, the greater the increase. 80% of participants in 1988 had completed a course in upper secondary school before entering it

- *the Adoption Scheme*; introduced in 1993, as an improvement on the Work Practice scheme, aimed at 20-24 year-olds. provides a mixture of training and work to improve employment/education opportunities. Firms and trade unions are expected to play an active part in close cooperation with Labour Market authorities: such "ownership" is considered important for the quality of training and practice. 3,100 participants in 1994. 60% of participants were employed immediately afterwards, 78% in their "host" company, and this is viewed as a positive sign

- *the Education and Work Preparatory Scheme*; introduced in 1987, with the idea of offering young people with incomplete certificates or poor grades from compulsory school the possibility to improve grades and gain some work experience. Estimated to have about 1,100-1,300 participants in 1993

Both **Norway** and **Sweden** have

- *Employment Training*: This is the most important instrument of **Swedish** labour market policy. It is of two kinds: training directed at unemployed job-seekers, and on-the-job-training. Nearly 2% of the labour force in the 18-24 age group were in employment training in 1993. In **Norway**'s equivalent, Labour Market Training (AMO), 13% of the 16-19 age group and 31% of the 20-24s took part in it (the lower limit is age 19). AMO courses have been offered leading to an upper secondary school certificate for those unemployed who lack initial training

Sweden's schemes include

- *the Trainee Temporary Replacement Scheme*: to enable employers and the public sector to make the necessary investment in personnel education. they can from 1991/2 fiscal year receive a payroll levy reduction of they hire a temporary replacement for an employee who is undergoing training. It is now estimated to provide temporary employment for about 3,600 young people per month in the first part of 1994

- *the Work Experience Scheme*: a new programme to activate and motivate the unemployed and help them to remain in contact with working life, was introduced in 1993. Its aim is to give people the opportunity to participate in activities that promote the local community or businesses and which would otherwise not have been realised. participants receive training grants equal to unemployment benefit. On average, 6,500 young people aged 18-24 attend this scheme every month

- *Recruitment Support*: this offers support (maximum 65% of total wage costs) to an employer who employs an unemployed person. Though not restricted to young people, it is much used for them. It can be used for young people under 24 after one month of unemployment (over 24, 3 months). It could be used after a period of Youth Training Scheme to make it even easier for an employer to employ a young person

- *the Youth Training Scheme*: this scheme, a kind of apprenticeship, was introduced in 1992 to meet the growth of youth unemployment, and is regarded as a temporary measure, which should be terminated in 1995. It aims to give young people aged 18-24 useful and necessary vocational training, practice, and experience of employment, mainly in the private sector. It is defined as an education and lasts 6 months, or 12 if the employer agrees to employ the young person. Employers must provide an introduction, guidance, and meaningful practice, but do not have to pay any salary or payroll tax. From 1994 they will have to pay a monthly sum (1,000 Swedish Kr) to the government. The young person receives compensation from the Employment Office, equivalent to training allowance. It is seen as an important requirement that the unemployed person has some control over, and can regain some influence on, his/her own life in this type of scheme

In 1993, about 9% of the 18-24 year-olds in the labour force had this kind of practice

About 27% of the young people in the scheme have got a regular job after their training. The individual development plan is a factor in its success: although not always provided, 35% of trainees who had passed their practice with a good and elaborated plan, got regular jobs afterwards compared with 27% of them without. The scheme has been evaluated, and one conclusion is that it must be combined with counselling and elaborated individual plans

Newly graduated graduates from university, aged 25-29, may attend a variant of this scheme for 3 months, which may be extended to 6

France has initiated a series of measures aimed at the reentry of the unemployed into the labour market. The CES (*Contrats Emploi-Solidarité*) were created under a law of 1989, and integrated several previous measures (the *Travaux d'Utilité Collective* (TUC) for young people aged 16-25, the *Programmes Locaux d'Insertion* (PIL), and the *Activités d'Intérêt Général* (AIG) aimed at the beneficiaries of RMI (*Revenu Minimum d'Insertion*))

CES courses normally last 3-12 months, renewable twice. They provide work, usually in a public sector establishment, at minimum wage rates, for which the employer is reimbursed

In **Belgium (Flanders)** the Youth Jobs Plan offers a social security contribution reduction to employers who immediately recruit a young person under age 16 who has been unemployed for 6 months, has produced 20,000 jobs in 6 months

Measures supported by the European Social Fund

In **Portugal**, several employment/training programmes were developed from 1986 aimed at reducing unemployment, especially among young people, most of them not leading to any qualification. Some were aimed at the already qualified: eg FIQ and JTI, for unemployed young people with intermediate and higher education qualifications. IJOVIP (1989), aimed at those with poor skills and generally only compulsory education, offering work experience and a short theoretical course, currently caters for 9,000 young people a year, though there is a substantial drop-out rate, by those who find a job or decide to reenter schooling. Another 12,000 young people a year (1991) were being catered for in other ESF-supported training, either in the private sector or run by the centres of the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training, most of it again not leading to any qualification

Linking training and employment

Besides the big "Assistance to the Disadvantaged" programme described in chapter 5, many local and regional measure exist in **Germany** for the support of the training of disadvantaged people, often supported by the *Länder*. Some of these are based on the approach of linking training with employment, often aimed at young adults (ie 18-25) who are unemployed and unqualified. The programmes may offer a range of temporary employment, vocational orientation, and be designed to lead on to a recognised vocational training. They may embody measures such as

- individualised employment and training plans
- learning by doing through practical work experience in companies
- support of practical learning by the teaching institution
- participating in selected course modules in the training institution
- the possibility of sitting for an "external trade test" in a recognised trade.

European Commission

Strategies to improve young people's access to, and their progression within, initial vocational training

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